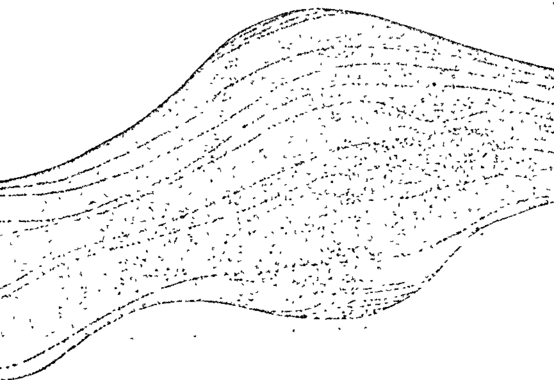
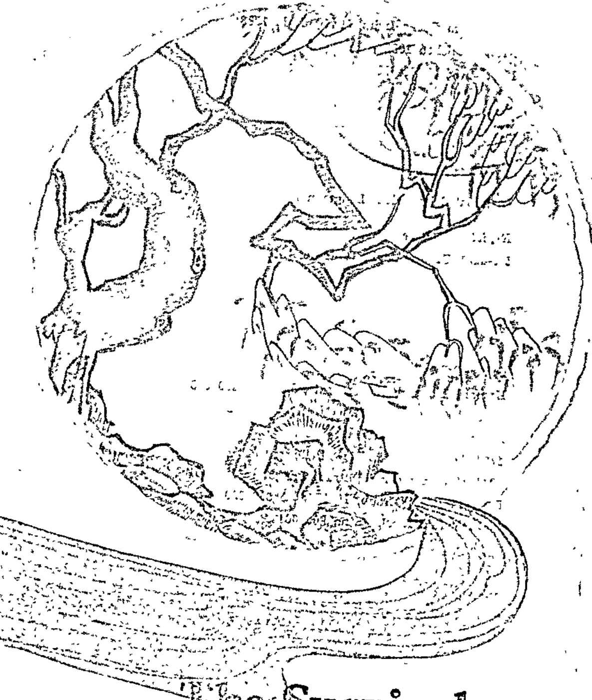
The Survival of the Individual



Sangam Books



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APA PANT

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Dearest Akshat, Anīla (Ameya), Trilok,

I am sure you will feel like reading the following pages, — but only after fifteen years or so!

So much will have changed by then all around you. Where will we all be fifteen years hence? In India, Africa, China, Russia, Europe, America? Or, somewhere far far away and yet very, very near each other? By then billions of individuals will be attuned to living in a "global village" and seeking new ways of expressing their individuality.

The dynamics and the speed of the new changes that are taking place all around us today will have accelerated enormously in the next fifteen years. With all these dynamic transformations taking place all over the world anything is possible now, provided you are intelligent, competent and ready to risk a life of fascinating adventure.

When the relationships between an individual and his environment and other fellow humans are relatively stable, transformations are slow.

But with this tremendous new (rajasic) vitality of science, technology and consumerism, these changes in the fundamental human relationships take place so fast that the mind of man which has brought forth this vitality is itself becoming confused, frustrated and unstable.

It seems that all this excitement of the mind today will in the next fifteen or twenty years create conditions of instability, frustration, violence, anger and hate beyond control, unless the mind itself is controlled and put in order.

As it is this mind-energy is highly volatile and restless. It jumps all the time to giddying heights of optimism, adventure, enjoyment, and down the next moment to despair, and the depths of frustration.

Science and technology, the creations of this restless mind-energy, bring about through the production of goods and services of a very wide variety, inordinate stimulation of the senses, and the mind imagines that security and happiness will come about through the satisfaction of the senses alone.

This illusion makes the mind restless and exhausted. It cannot create harmony or happiness around it. All its relationships with the environment and with other humans become distorted, and war, famine, pollution and exploitation follow.

But you will soon be finding out for yourself the tremendous energy and joy of a mind that is *not* restless; a mind without fear, anger, hate or anxiety, and then your real adventures and explorations, without and within, will start.

Your parents will certainly show you, as perhaps the parents of hundreds of thousands of other children like yourselves all over the world would attempt to, how an "orderly" mind alone can create harmony and happiness all around it and help build up a society where caring and sharing will replace conflict and competition.

Now you stand on the threshold of a new world struggling to be reborn amidst all this chaos and misery that your parents and grandparents have left you to face. The intelligence, competence and compassion that will be required to bring some system, harmony and equilibrium to such a world can only come about when the mind is organized. Only a mind that is without fear, anger, hate, violence or anxiety has the energy to be intelligent and compassionate.

You have been aware of this Joy-Energy-Love *all the while*. As we picked up coloured stones or flowers from hills around Poona, or watched the silent moon climb over the magnificent maple in Inverary, or when toy (or real) trains puffed proudly from underneath the bridges, or when you swam or skied with Papa and Mama, or when birds sang to the rising Sun. It is all the time there, timeless, silent, beautiful.

You must always be aware of it, and you will never miss the way. These silent moments of joy and love *are* this energy. Being aware of this is intelligence. Being under the illusion that you are separate from it is ignorance.

Surely, as your parents and Aditi Maushi (Atya) did long ago, and do even more vigorously now, you will question in 1997 much of what I have tried to say in 1982 in the following pages.

What great *FUN* it would be if, in 1997, we were we would be able to argue again and again, through word-feelings, about THAT which is beyond them !

Jai Jagadamb !

Apakaka

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RAMESHWAR

For

All those Moments in SILENCE

APA

PANT NIWAS
POONA – 4

10.10.82

CHAPTER
I

THE INDIVIDUAL HIS ENVIRONMENT HIS SURVIVAL



It is more than obvious, to those who can see, that the survival of the individual as a sane person is today being made miserable and precarious in almost all societies. The forces that suppress and threaten him are the enormous pressures of population, pollution and poverty; the criminally wasteful power-games and egomania of politicians, and indeed the structure of the Nation-State itself.

The tension (and the consequent physical and nervous exhaustion) of surviving in a highly competitive consumer society, with its crude, corrupt callousness at all levels of existence, is making the individual confused as well as cynical. With the feeling that there is no creative purpose in his life, or his way of living, he tends to turn into either a hedonist or a nihilist.

How then can an individual survive? Can he "survive" at all if he is insecure, angry and frightened? For how long will he survive in this condition? What sort of society will such an individual help to create around himself?

The way in which an individual responds to his environment decides the manner and duration of his survival. Examining the distortions that occur in this mutual relationship, and the problems

that result, may give us a clue to the opposite: how the individual can survive and function in harmony with society.

At every moment of his existence, the environment poses challenges at various levels to the individual. These challenges are: (1) *physical* e g. the positive demands for food, clothing, shelter, and the negative pressures of pollution, over-population, poverty or exploitation, (2) *mental,* e g. needs, desires, relationship with authority, the search for security and prosperity; (3) *intellectual,* e.g. having a purpose for living, creating harmony, order, beauty and happiness around him

If his responses to these challenges are intelligent, compassionate and competent, the individual can experience happiness and fulfilment. Such an individual will help to create a stable, orderly and happy society.

If, on the other hand, his responses are distorted by anger, hate, egomania and the hunger for power, and are the result of ignorance, incompetence and selfishness, the individual will create around him a society of exploitation, crime and corruption; of wars, misery and death. The individual who has helped to create such a society will himself have to face the consequences, and survive as a frightened, uncivilized and unhappy human being.

If even a few individuals respond to these challenges criminally, they can make the life of the majority a misery. Poverty, exploitation, crime and corruption then become endemic.

What can a sane individual do under such circumstances? Can he be at all effective? What are the methods that he should follow? How soon can he succeed? How and when will those holding and enjoying power and privilege today give it up? To survive in today's very rapidly changing dynamic environment, an individual must ask himself these questions.

In the last hundred years or so, there has been a virtual explosion of new knowledge and experience. The capacity of an individual to know and experience things through his senses, his eyes, ears, touch and memory, has increased a hundred thousand-fold, thanks to sophisticated scientific tools such as radar, X-rays, computers, or microprocessors. But his capacity to digest this knowledge

and utilize it for sane living has not kept pace with his knowledge and experience.

Transport and communications have linked him to lands, people, cultures and experiences which had never entered his most fantastic dreams. From the sub- and sub-sub-atomic, the microcosm, to the vastest galactic macrocosmic, he now has the capacity of comprehending, of experiencing things direct.

This new era, one of rapid change, is also one of high excitement. It is a time of adventure, speed and competition, a time when vistas of vast and incalculable opportunities and power have opened. But all these have multiplied and magnified the opportunities for corruption, greed and pride.

The criminal and corrupt games of power, in which enormous resources are wasted, grow in national and international affairs, and the rich continue to become more powerful, the poor more frustrated and restless. Old formulae, once successful in bringing about symmetry and harmony between individuals or groups in a society, or between two different societies, no longer work. New and intelligent approaches to systematizing conflicting and contradictory interests are slow in emerging.

The problems of this new age are not only those of rapid change. They are those of man, although now a "global" being, wishing to survive as a national individual, restricted by caste, race and ritual. As his mind has been conditioned to operate within these old, narrow ruts, it cannot face the challenges of the new "one" world that is already with us physically. Science and technology, the speed of travel and sophisticated communications systems, consumerism and computers have made this new world interdependent and interlinked, creating a new range of global relationships around the individual in all fields of his existence.

As economic, social and cultural relationships become more and more complicated, interlinked and worldwide, an individual feels, and is, by and large, incapable of dealing with the day-to-day problems of his life. His depersonalization in huge organizations or in large, densely populated cities, leads to violence and destruction. He feels lost and depends for his survival on "leaders" or organizations or the state; or as a last resort, he escapes into other-worldly activities. Pilgrimages please when politicians fail.

The Survival of the Individual

There are enormous pressures today on the individual all over the world, pressures due to distorted power structures (political, economic and religio-cultural). The State today overpowers and controls the life of the individual, either directly by taxation and prohibitory laws, or indirectly by economic measures that affect his life. The individual seems to have no choice but to submit. Under these pressures he becomes confused, frustrated and neurotic.

It seems that for quite a while to come, suffering, migration and wars will be the lot of the individual. He seems incapable, all alone, of altering the powerful currents of greed, exploitation and power-conflicts which waste the limited resources of the earth.

It has always been the case that the motivated and the clever reach places of power, and try to manage societies for their own advantage. Those who are ignorant and lack the necessary motivation, tolerate all the inequalities and hardships till they become unbearable. Then an explosion of revolt takes place, and the whole story is started anew. Today this process operates on a global scale between nations instead of individuals, and the pace of change is terrifying. The two major powers, in spite of the lessons of Vietnam and the OPEC cartel, are under the illusion that this state of affairs can continue, that they can keep the system going. But it has already broken down.

CHAPTER II

THIS NEW AGE



Few of us feel, or even try to understand the thrill and the excitement of the new age that is with us today. It is a period of gigantic, rapid and fundamental changes; it is an age of adventure, and of a life with ever-widening horizons, physical, mental, and intellectual. It is an age of tremendous energy and of restlessness.

To do well or even to survive in this new world one must first not only see clearly the colossal changes taking place around one, but also understand how one is personally involved and affected by them, and how they are altering the pattern of life of millions, indeed billions, of us.

But knowing and seeing clearly is not enough. Competence and a capacity to work within the rapidly changing pattern of life will have to be acquired, for it seems that this new world is only for the intelligent and the competent.

We must understand first of all that the dynamics of this new age, its vital energy, spring from science and technology. The energy can be used for the production of basic goods and services, for travel, enjoyment, and adventure, for acquiring new knowledge and for establishing a wide range of commercial or cultural contacts with people of different races, creeds, cultures and temperament.

But if we do not use the secrets of science and technology in a disciplined, capable way, they can destroy us. We have the example in the present century of two World Wars and two destructive

atomic explosions. The stupid horror which is present with us today, of the stockpiling of atomic weapons by the superpowers and others, only means that we have not yet learned from these examples. Deforestation and the pollution of seas, rivers, lakes, land and cities, in the name of development, indicate that this vital energy is being misused by us.

Each type of society has its own special rules, regulations and disciplines to make it function smoothly. Each one expects its citizens to have certain capacities, and to utilize them efficiently in exchange for protection and benefits. In a tribal society, this mutual relationship of duty and benefit exists between tribesman and tribe; in a feudal society, between master and servant, or king and subject. In the closed society of Indian villages, for thousands of years, all the various trades — the smith, the carpenter, potter, cobbler, builder, farmer, merchant and landworker — were linked to each other by interdependent, mutually profitable relationships.

The new society that is being born around us all over the world has a new and more exacting range of rules, regulations and disciplines, the observance of which alone will enable it to function smoothly. The problems of exploitation, corruption and conflict that we see in many parts of the world (including India) exist because we do not see clearly what the new and more exacting rules, regulations and disciplines of this new age are. We imagine that our old habits and former capacities, that enabled us to function in a tribal, feudal or traditional system, will do for this new one too It is as if we were trying to operate a modern pumping set on an old well with only the skills and experience we have gained with the old wheel-and-bucket system.

When wealth in the form of enjoyable goods and services is limited, greed too has limits. Of course, we have always had mad dictators who killed, pillaged and destroyed for gain, even limited gain. But now, thanks to science and technology, we have a vast range of goods and services to covet, and the greed for these seems to have no limits, nor does the capacity of an individual to destroy himself and others in order to acquire them. We are also well aware of what is happening to man in big cities, and what he is doing to rivers, oceans, forests and land all over the world in the name of

"progress". Even today, when every reasonable need of a person anywhere in the world can potentially be satisfied, it is his illogical, ignorant greed that is making it more and more impossible to do so. The State and its power often encourage greed and enable it to operate under the garb of nationalism, patriotism, religion or idealism. Greed and power distort the nature of the individual and cause him to lose sight of his goal of progress or peace and well-being.

The basic problem, then, that creates frictions, exploitation and wars, is that the individual does not realize that (as a result of science and technology and of the new methods of production, distribution and consumption of goods and services) he is interrelated and interdependent with others elsewhere on the face of this globe. Arab, Indian, Chinese, Russian, European, American, African and Japanese are today, thanks to the dynamics of this new age, linked and dependent for their survival on each other. And yet in their ignorance each wants to exploit or kill the other, who alone can sustain and guarantee his own survival.

One should never take out of anything productive more than one can put back. This is so of a bank, of land, the seas, the forests, the rivers — or of society as a whole. Man the individual destroys himself if he takes out more than he can put back into his environment.

This is truer in this new age of over-population, pollution and power-mania. Under these enormous irrational pressures the individual often feels helpless and loses hope. But to make a long journey one must start with the first step.

The first step can be taken only at the individual level. To live in the new age, an individual must be competent and capable. The higher the standard of living that he wants, the more efficient and *competent he has to be in his own work. This is how he contributes* to the production of the goods and services he wants. If, in our own field of work, we are inefficient and incompetent, we cannot expect a higher standard of living. If we expect to have a better life, and want someone else to work for us and give it to us, we are only labouring under a delusion. We can never get anything without paying the full price for it.

The major, most common, and most futile illusion prevalent today is that a government, a leader, a Prime Minister, or maybe a dictator, can give us all that we desire. We imagine that the government can give us food, clothing, happiness, contentment, and freedom. This dependence on the government and on leaders is, perhaps, a hangover from feudal days; it is, however, totally irrelevant to these modern times. No government has ever provided all these wants, no matter what promises and proclamations dictators or leaders may have made. The illusion that the government can, is corrupting and creates chaos. Governments in this complicated, interrelated "one world" of ours can effectively perform only marginal municipal functions. Some of these are at times necessary and important. But a government cannot take over the duties and responsibilities of an individual.

In this new age the relationship of the individual with authority, that is the State, the governing organizations, political associations — in essence the hierarchy of power — is of prime importance. In recent times, the cult of the State has grown out of all proportion to its need and utility for humans. If the State, the Nation, the leader, the Party have grown into Gods, who are worshipped as kings used to be in feudal times, it is in fact the feudalistic way of thought of the people as a whole that has permitted them to do so.

The new energy of this age of science and technology cannot be dealt with by these old outmoded power-hierarchies. Politicians in power do not know the rules of the new society that is being born around them. Representing the vested interests of groups in a society, they are very often ignorant and incompetent to govern, and do not have a holistic, global vision.

Next to our illusion of an all-providing government is a second illusion: that we can have something for nothing. The "do's and don'ts" imposed on enjoyment by a feudal, caste, tribal, traditional society are gone for ever. For the first time man is free to enjoy life without feeling ashamed to do so. Desire and enjoyment are integral parts of this exciting new world. They can even be called the main driving force behind it. In this consumer society, we are provoked into an increasing desire for material goods. Unless we

desire more and more, shops will not be able to sell their goods, and factories will remain idle.

If we want to enter this game let us do so by all means, but let us remember the need for our contribution of intelligent, hard work to balance what we take from the consumer society.

This freedom to enjoy is itself an energy, a very powerful motivation. But if society is to survive, our enjoyment should not be achieved by exploitation or domination of others, or by violence and force. If we still persist in violence and seek dominance, we carry ourselves and our society to war, destruction, misery and death.

The third illusion we usually indulge in is that in this scientific, technological age, machines will do the productive work and we can live and function without any discipline ourselves. Each type of society has its own discipline In this new age the most exacting discipline is intelligent efficiency; as is said in the Geeta: *"Yogah karmasu kaushalam"*, or "Yoga is efficiency in work".

Only that discipline is creative, and will lead to a stable society of contentment, which is imposed by ourselves. Discipline under the orders of leaders and government, imposed by fear and force, leads to dictatorships and misery. Self-discipline starts from doing efficiently and intelligently whatever work we undertake, by understanding how our existence is inter-related and interdependent with the environment. Self-discipline is expressed in our behaviour towards others in society and the environment, including trees, rivers, land and the sea. It is expressed in how well we treat our natural environment, the bio-mass which supports us and ensures our survival as individuals.

It is a lack of intelligent efficiency and self-discipline that is responsible for much that is happening around us everywhere today — for the careless, chaotic traffic jams; for dirty, dingy cities that are an open invitation to crime and disease; for polluted rivers; for ruthlessly cut forests and eroded fields.

As individuals we need to master the secrets of science and technology to enable us to live happily in this world of speed, competition and excitement. So also must we see why and how corruption, cruelty and exploitation arise. Above all, we must see that it is essential to master our own greed, and observe with intelligence

how conflicts and confusion arise in this new society through our own thinking and feeling.

As man should act with care towards his environment, so should nations act towards each other. Every part of this small world of ours is now interlinked and interdependent — America, Africa, Asia and Europe; Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Jews, Buddhists and Jains. If one part is hurt, so is the other. Violence in such a world ("one world") is irrational and impractical. We see how stupid violence is, when nations prepare fo war and destroy each other. Afterwards the victors lend money to those destroyed, as in the case of Germany and Japan after World War II, so that trade, industry and commerce will flow uninterruptedly ! Violence within any society is globally harmful because we are all so interdependent. Violence between different societies is unprofitable, except for those who manufacture arms and ammunition and sell them for huge profits. Today all over the world huge and powerful corporations deal in this merchandise of death and destruction and create havoc. They sell arms and ammunition to both sides, as the Russians did to Ethiopia and Somalia, and the USA to Iran and Iraq, India and Pakistan. Britain, France and Belgium do so all the time. But intelligent people all over the world are now alert to these criminal games of power and perhaps the next generation will wake up and stop them.

In this tremendously exciting new age we are going to face problems of unemployment, poverty and inequality, of exploitation and corruption. They are the hangover of an old dying system which divided human beings by caste, creed and culture, and took pride in wars and destruction. This new age of science and technology with its tremendous energy and power has the potential to transform all the social, economic, educational and political institutions of this old system.

The old concept of identity, restricted by caste, creed, colour and nationality, is out of place and irrelevant in this age of science and technology. When one is interconnected with everyone else in the world through commerce, industry, knowledge, or culture, when telecommunication and air travel are bringing the ideas and ways of behaviour, music, sports, literature and drama of different cultures right into one's living room, how can one then be only a

Hindu, Christian, Muslim or Buddhist, or think of oneself as black, brown, white or yellow? One's identity is now worldwide, universal, as one can survive only along with the rest of the world. It is only if the individual sees this clearly that he can aspire to the competence to live in this new world. This is intelligence. Only a few have it. Even fewer will be able to acquire the competence to operate and manage, organize and direct this highly complicated and complex range of socio-economic-cultural relationships which involve the whole world. This "elite" will be specialists and also will have a holistic vision.

The socio cultural relationships between humans will be totally transformed as the result of this new dynamic of rapid change. New types of communities will come into existence. These will not be restricted by geographical boundaries or political factions. As the relationship of the individual with his work is changed, communities will be comprised of individuals from all over the globe who follow common disciplines.

CHAPTER
III

THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE STRUCTURE OF POWER



As we have seen in the last chapter, this new age of science and technology, with all its attractions and promise, confronts the individual with some of the most serious problems threatening his survival.

This new age of rapid change, movement, speed and restlessness is an age when man, because of the development of transport and communications, is faced with adjustment as never before to unfamiliar sights, sounds, smells and tastes. The speed of this change, which is taking place at all levels of the individual's consciousness, totally disorients him.

Most of the problems in the way of the survival of the individual in this new age arise and will continue to arise from his resistance to change. The negative forces of habit and tradition will not allow an individual to survive and function as a global person. But the positive urge to survive and function in this new age is also powerful. Intelligent attempts to create a vast new range of relationships between man and man, between man and his environment, and between man and his society, are becoming more and more prevalent, and can enable an individual to survive meaningfully and creatively.

Let us examine how an individual becomes involved in the hierarchy of power, political, administrative and economic, in his society. We can then see how his identity and his personality are affected by the motivations and frustrations that are caused by this very involvement. It would also be interesting to see how the relationship of an individual to the work he is doing in society shapes not only his own personality, but the structure of the society itself.

It is the individual who creates and supports the society he lives in. His needs, fears, frustrations and capacities shape the society around him.

Primarily an individual seeks relaxed relationships with fellow humans and with his environment. He expects such healthy relationships to give him an "identity" that can help create a stable society even in this complex world.

But a depressed, suppressed, exploited, "powerless" individual, with no pride of position, identifies himself with a struggle that leads ultimately to "freedom". During this period he is willing to (and often does) suffer and even die, because he feels that as a result of his suffering or death he or his children will cease to be suppressed and exploited. He also feels that after the struggle and sacrifice, he will be able to get what his present rulers enjoy through "power", that is, pride, possessions, glory, glamour and a sense of fulfilment. At the very inception of the struggle for freedom he gets involved in an organization, i e., a party, a dogma or a hierarchy that is power oriented.

To consider someone else's power, profit, glory, or enjoyment to be one's own by right is perhaps an inherent characteristic of an immature, lazy and ignorant person. Even so-called intelligent people, philosophers, writers, poets and artists, often feel proud and glorify the rapacity, killing and devastation brought about by power-mad kings, dictators, revolutionaries and religious fanatics. Why, in spite of all the disadvantages and hardships, does the individual identify himself with power? Is it only fear, is it greed, or something deeper that brings this about? Is the vicarious involvement in the arrogant fanfare and display of the power and pleasures of a few at the top sufficient to keep the "ordinary" individual contented? Structures of power are kept up for years and

no intelligent, creative share in the authority or power that was enjoyed by a few. This is true of all power structures, throughout history.

Some of the more recent examples of this are even more shocking and sad. European history over the last hundred years or so has been a saga of sad wars, three of them major ones; the Franco-Prussian war, World War I, and World War II, the last of which was the biggest, the most horrible, the most useless of all. These wars were fought by individuals, who were forced into them in the name of "peace" and the glory of a nation-state or, to maintain the "balance of power" between the nation-states concerned. An individual from Germany, France, Great Britain, or Russia during this period was made to feel that his identity, his security, his very being, depended upon the success of his side in this game of power. The loss of lives alone in these "great" wars has been 75,000,000, or seven and a half crores! The material, moral and sociological devastation was incalculable. It was the involvement of the individual, perhaps unconsciously seeking identity, security and continuity through power, for a Nation State, ideology or religion, that made this madness possible.

After this useless waste and suffering, after 75,000,000 had died to maintain the separate and always conflicting structures of power and prestige — the Nation States of Europe — the conclusion was reached that there should be only one Europe! Today the Nation States of NATO or the EEC, after the experiences of World War II, are differently structured, and function as interlinked, interdependent units of *one* Europe. Technology has made this possible; consumer pressures and the profit motive have made it inevitable. The former Nation States of Europe, independent of each other, no longer exist.

Was all the suffering and loss necessary or inevitable for the creation of the new structure of socio-economic-political relationships in Europe?

In Europe after the Second World War the concept of the power of a Nation State and the involvement of an individual in it, be he Italian, German, French, Belgian, or Dutch, has changed considerably. The dreams of power of De Gaulle which vaguely

stimulated the French mind for a while, dissolved with the realities of a crumbling empire in Africa. Great Britain, who ruled the waves for a century and a half, on whose empire the sun never set, finds today that to her citizens an identity as heirs to the heritage of a "great power" is meaningless, even odious.

The British have undergone a tremendous metamorphosis after World War II, and their involvement in the power game has also undergone a sea change. The British politico-economic system is, perhaps, in spite of the break-up of the existing political parties, more pragmatic now and less emotional, and, therefore, less likely to create insoluble conflicts and suffering for themselves and others. This is notwithstanding the Thatcher experiment.

Is it always ignorance and weakness that leads an individual to identify himself with power? To feel proud, complete and really fulfilled, must he always resort to power and get himself involved in a hierarchy of authority even if it brings all manner of contradictions and suffering in its wake? How this process of identification with 'power' starts can be seen clearly in all the most recent "freedom" struggles, including the one in India.

The most recent happenings in the USSR, East European countries, China and in the countries of Afro-Asia and Latin America also illustrate this point.

We are not discussing here whether a change of authority does or does not bring about "progress", that is, a certain amount of increase in production or change in the methods of production, consumption and distribution of goods and services. We are examining the fact that an individual continues to have the same negative feelings of suppression, oppression, fear and anger towards the new authority.

But the mere disillusionment of a few individuals is not enough to effect a sudden change in the pattern of power or the persons who wield it. These get changed, often violently, when other groups in the same society organize themselves to capture power for their own profit and pride.

Frightened, frustrated, incompetent, insecure and anxious, the individual shirks his responsibilities and is ready to obey those who, attracted by centralized power, grab it and make use of it

for their own personal benefit. The trouble is that the 'leader', Prime Minister or Dictator, and all who know how to grab power have a highly limited and distorted vision. Often they have less competence in the management of men and affairs, than the frightened, frustrated individual who has helped them to power.

It is the individual who thus creates the leaders and allows them to control his life. In societies where power becomes highly centralized, and authority takes over all aspects of life, man as an individual dies.

In Indonesia Sukarno played, for a while, the game of keeping the Communists, the Muslims and the Army against each other (he called it Nasakom) to keep himself at the head of affairs. The poor, bewildered, and often frustrated and angry Indonesians were infected by his enormous ego and inordinate pride. When Sukarno thundered abuse at the Dutch, the British or the Americans and dared them to call his bluff, the Indonesians felt elated and powerful. Nasser too kept the Egyptians excited, proud and even arrogant till the Seven Day War in 1967. At the end of a few years the Indonesians and Egyptians, unfortunately after millions had suffered and thousands were dead, did see that they were exactly where they had started from, and that their relationship with the power of Sukarno or Nasser and the hierarchy of authority was, at best,, negative, based on fear or cynicism.

In 1966 Nasser was at the height of his power in the Arab world. In the name of the "Arab Revolution" and the "100,000,000 Arabs" he consolidated his power, and his defiant attitude filled many of his people with an arrogant sense of fulfilment. At this moment of power and so-called glory, the utter misery, poverty, corruption and incompetence in Egypt and in other Arab lands was forgotten by the individual.

Then came the Seven Day War in 1967, the utter humiliating defeat and a sudden and complete deflation of this 'Ego'. Nasser died at the very moment of this disastrous defeat, and with him died thousands of Arab egos involved in his power. What a sad spectacle it was ! In Libya alone there were 102 suicides. Thousands went raving mad. In Egypt the scene was no less pathetic.

The tragedies of Iran and Afghanistan, caught *in the cross fires* of Big Power rivalry, are even more harrowing. As the facts emerge from the dense cloud of political deception and propaganda, it seems that the individual in Iran or Afghanistan has had no choice about the structure of power or its misuse. He has been terrorized by whoever captured power, bombarded and brainwashed by radio, television, and the press, harassed by the secret police or KGB or CIA and has been killed, or made to kill, in the name of the Shah, the revolution, religion, or progress.

We are discussing what happens to an individual and his identity when he gets involved in the creation and maintenance of a power structure in a society. To systematize relationships in a society, to bring stability, harmony and growth (the popular word is "progress"); in short, to manage a society, a pyramid of power is built up This power is supposed to be controlled through properly enacted constitutions, proclamations, laws, regulations, etc.

This authority, with its slow-moving, inefficient institutions and vast, self-perpetuating bureaucracy, is expected to perform the task of systematizing and bring harmony and coherence to the various group relationships in a modern, complicated and sophisticated society. These expectations are seldom fulfilled.

Within a limited range of activities such as maintenance of law and order, traffic control, transport and creating the right conditions for harmonization of conflicting group interests, a centralized authority can, and often does, if manned by intelligent, competent persons, perform useful functions.

Only in those societies in which the individual is alertly intelligent, competent and willing to assume full responsibility for his own actions, can an authority or a government perform tasks that help bring order and harmony to the conflicting and often contradictory claims of the various groups of that society.

In a society where the individual is afraid to break away from tradition and not competent enough to take up his full responsibility, leaderships or dictatorships are bound to emerge. This is true of many countries which have recently gained independence. In a way it is a delegation of power by the individual to an elected or usurping authority that brings about his own depersonaliza-

tion and suppression by it. His total, inescapable dependence on this authority for social, economic and, more particularly, psychological survival follows.

With world socio-economic forces acting on a society, and with modernization and industrialization making it more complex, an individual is less capable of understanding what is happening to him and around him. As an individual he is also incapable of facing the colossal pressures, exerted, and the crushing demands made on him.

Anger and hate are part of the urge for power. Within a community or internationally, the building up of power by a group or a nation automatically leads to conflict with other groups who *also have the same desires and who attempt to be powerful at the* cost of others. Rivalry leads to fear, which leads to anger and hate.

When such struggles for power excite the minds of individuals, reason, compassion and the long term objectives of human existence are totally forgotten. The few who retain their reason stand alone, unheeded, isolated in such times. No one is willing to listen to anyone who is not as excited, angry or full of hate as the multitude. Only when the poison of passion is purged by a great deal of killing, destruction, and suffering, is the silent voice of reason heard once more. Then, of course, it is too late.

It has always been so. But now the price paid for such happenings has become too high. There is no glory or heroism in death and destruction, and no longer do poets sing the praises, or artists paint pictures of heroes who die in these struggles for power.

Thus in Ethiopia, Indo-China, Kampuchea in particular, and also in Mozambique, Angola, El Salvador and Columbia, war makes no heroes. Nor, perhaps, does it in Afghanistan or Iran. If Iran and Afghanistan were not in the cross-fire of the Big Power struggle, the process of change in these countries might have been slower and, perhaps, there would have been much less suffering. When a power struggle is introduced from outside, not only is there violence and suffering on a much larger scale, but also the devastating effect of foreign weaponry, organization and tactics, which create a situation of total confusion and disorientation.

Two other areas which have been subjected to devastation and suffering are Indo-China and Palestine. Kampuchea, Laos and Vietnam are now totally destroyed after decades of war. The people of these countries have become refugees, starving, hopeless and forgotten by those who caused their misery. The individual had no choice in these countries. He submitted to those who were playing the game of power and even played a passive part in his own destruction.

In the Palestine-Israel struggle, often called the Arab-Israel struggle, the involvement of the big powers has made the problem insoluble. Syria, Lebanon and Israel are all wasting their resources in conflict. An individual there cannot live in peace and harmony with his fellow humans however much he may desire to do so. Hate and anger, deliberately provoked, lead to violence and more anger and hate. This is an unending vicious circle.

Today we notice the same situation in Ethiopia, Somalia and the Sudan. Introduce the big power rivalry and you have the destruction of the individual and of his desire for companionship and a peaceful life.

In a way, the countries of South America are in a class by themselves in the global struggle for power and resources. For the last seventy-five years the whole of this area has been "farmed" by the USA and the big multinationals for their own benefit. Raw materials including oil, copper, zinc, meat and forest products, fruit and agricultural commodities were "developed" with the help of the USA.

The inflow of capital and capacity produced marketable wealth but also socio-cultural and political tensions. Starting with Mexico, and going on to Cuba, Chile, Peru, Colombia, Argentina, Brazil and El Salvador, the countries of Latin America have had violence, terror, revolutions and repressions. The individual in these countries is bewildered, frightened and often hopeless. Today, for the first time, the rest of the world is becoming aware of his tragedies.

The USA receives its share of the world's blame both for its initial exploitation of these countries and for its continuing support to the present-day Latin American dictators. The myth that the USA is the most powerful country in the world has had the

effect of distorting every international event in which the USA is concerned to such an extent, that the American has emerged on the world stage in the persona of the "ugly American", and even the most ardent admirers and allies of the USA find it difficult to identify themselves with this image. But where the USA used to tread profitably, the USSR now stakes a claim.

In the complex, interdependent socio-economic and cultural relationships of this modern world, the political and administrative hierarchies of the less developed countries (LDCs) seem to be doing badly almost everywhere They do not see the new problems and, therefore, can do nothing about them. They are often not intelligent or competent enough to deal with them. In these small or big LDCs enormous resources and time are wasted on deciding who sits on which chair and when.

Executive machinery is thus corrupted at its source of functioning, however efficient or well motivated an individual in it may be. When political powers constantly interfere in the administration, chaos and corruption result.

One result of the games of power is that the individual remains forgotten and lost. Apart from the World Wars, more recent examples of this are found in Vietnam, Biafra, Somalia, Iran, Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Angola and in the endless struggle in West Asia. In Vietnam the misconceived notion of "national" interests led to the destruction of a whole people and a culture. The policy of "containment" of China for the greatness, glory and, above all, profit of the USA is now, after the diabolical killing of hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese, being replaced by promoting cooperation with China ! Some American individuals saw through all this hypocrisy, arrogance and stupidity of power and rebelled against it to bring the unnecessary war to an end.

A disastrous result of this hysterical power hunger in recent times has been that of Pakistan. To sustain a society in modern times totally on religion and emotionalism is to involve the individual in confusing and counterproductive activities. However stimulating a religious myth may be, an individual cannot remain at that pitch of emotional excitement all the time. The power game that the leaders in Pakistan have played during the last 30

years has not only broken up Pakistan politically but has brought disillusionment to the individual and the loss of a clear definition of his personality.

After World War II, Germany and Japan were made to do away with a part of their defence apparatus. As a result, with their citizens less involved in the games of power, they prospered. Now, under varying compulsions, economic, political or competitive, they too have entered the power game.

But both in Germany and Japan the mystical aura that surrounded power has been done away with. That is part of the reason why a Japanese or a German is much less involved and psychologically dependent on, or enslaved by the state.

All communities throughout the ages have created myths, heroes and ideologies to keep their citizens occupied, disciplined and under control. The Greeks, the Romans, the Egyptians, the Chinese, and in more recent times the British, French, Germans, Russians and Japanese, created myths and slogans to keep their communities in working or fighting order. These emotional stimulants were often distorted and brought chaos, suffering and frustration to the individuals concerned.

Let us look at India for a while and see how we as individuals are functioning in relation to the States or at the Centre. We have created, with great intelligence and good faith, the whole paraphernalia of democracy – a constitution, a President, a Prime Minister, Chief Ministers, Governors, etc. The whole show was run reasonably intelligently under Nehru, as a one-man, semi-feudal dictatorship. So long as power was not popularized, things seemed to go well. Once the glory, profit and pride of power came within easy reach of anyone who was motivated enough to get himself elected, the welfare of society and harmony and happiness between individuals were sacrificed in games of power. How much of what happens today in the ministries in New Delhi, Bombay, Chandigarh or Madras really concerns the welfare of an individual in this land?

Though we often feel angry and frustrated at the way the centralized power-profit-pride apparatus functions, most of us continue to be under the illusion that for the better management of

society and for the systematization of conflicting claims and interests, political, economic or sociological, all this wasteful expenditure is necessary. Through fear of even more chaos and suffering, the established hierarchies of authority, with their extremely limited vision and inadequate capacity, continue to be tolerated. Even bribery or corruption is taken as 'efficiency' money necessary to move the machine.

How many of us today, even after Mahatma Gandhi who taught us to stand up for our rights, cringe before power and simultaneously hate ourselves for doing so. Most of us seem to run after power for profit. Is it that power gives one a sense of satisfaction and fulfilment? Is this an indication of inner emptiness, of insecurity? Is it because the struggle for survival is hard, that one feels that only the powers that be can protect and provide for us?

What of all those glorious Indian traditions that have proclaimed throughout the ages the ideal relationship of an individual with authority? Where is the fearless truth-seeker, the dedicated nationalist following the path of non-attachment and non-violence?

Is it that the shock of rapid changes, of sudden exposure to the responsibilities of a complicated, uncertain life have bewildered us and benumbed our sensibilities?

Situated as we are in a composite multi-cultural, multi-racial, multi-religious system, it should be very difficult for India as a nation to go back to any kind of irrational fundamentalism as has happened elsewhere, e.g. in Iran, Egypt, Libya or tribal Africa. As yet, (whatever Chinese or Western propaganda may proclaim) Indian chauvinism, apart from minor individual refinements of it, has not surfaced to a serious degree. At a more subtle level, and at a time when there is no agitation or frustration, the Indian mind is more favourably situated than most for realizing the necessity of unity and the sacredness of life. The eclectic nature of the Indian tradition may, perhaps, make this more possible here than elsewhere.

However, happenings in the early 1980s in Assam, Tripura, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and elsewhere are a

serious challenge to the type of Indian ethos that we have projected above. Vested interests, whether Hindu, Muslim, Christian or Animist, hold on to power ruthlessly when challenged.

The hierarchies of authority, which are perhaps the best organized, most subtle and efficient of the vested interests already referred to, resist any change. State enterprises, whether banks, the insurance organizations, cooperative societies, industries, executive departments, or policy formulating political bodies, once established, not only entrench themselves, but also grow. The individual is lost in them.

Obviously an apparatus that supports people, gives them their daily bread, and occasionally a little butter, cannot suddenly dissolve itself. It involves the lives of thousands in a country like India. The Defence forces, the nationalized banks, the Insurance Corporations, and the public enterprises in India give employment to and support over 20,000,000 persons. Can they be disbanded or trimmed? The apparatus may be expensive and inefficient but it employs people! That is the argument.

The fastest growing hierarchies in a society are the Defence forces, the secret police, and the political hierarchy. In India which has long been power-starved, the last category grows the fastest.

But a poor society like India cannot afford to have an apparatus of management that is expensive and inefficient, even though it may employ people. It would be better to give a dole under a welfare scheme than employ inefficient individuals who clog the production or distribution of goods and services

Nasser in Egypt tried to employ every graduate from the Universities and ended by disrupting production in factories and farms, and his transport system became chaotic. The experience of China during the Cultural Revolution, when millions were unnecessarily and disastrously employed on farms and factories and in administration, tells the same story. The fate of the Indian economy will be even more disastrous if strict cost-accounting is not introduced in all the State enterprises, including Parliament, the Presidency and the Prime Minister's Secretariat.

If the apparatus of the State, the Government, is viewed as an organization for the efficient management of a complete, sophisti-

cated, socio-cultural-economic system, and not something mystical and powerful to which an individual attaches himself for emotional and psychological reasons, cost-accounting will be introduced and it will be easier to run the apparatus in a manner beneficial to the nation

The question of the Pakistani personality is also important to India. It poses a challenge to the smooth evolution of the multilingual, multireligious, multicultural identity of the Indian individual.

Islam is a religion of peace and brotherhood, and its spiritual heritage is part of Indian history and culture The music, food, clothes, language, literature, architecture, and philosophy of the Muslim and Hindu cultures have coexisted in this sub-continent for a thousand years and the mixture of cultures has been accepted by the intelligentsia as well as by the common people of both these cultures.

The Pakistani ideal of a 'pure' (Pak) society, with Islamic fundamentalism as its basis, created situations of confrontation with India — a 'non-Pak' (impure) country — which were not necessary.

What is more, the emotional and social evolution of these two nations need not have led to three unproductive and disastrous wars, were it not for the involvement of Pakistan in the big game of power between Russia-China and the USA.

Has Pakistan learnt a lesson from the disastrous results of war? Will she continue to play the game of power with Chinese arms and Islamic bombs? What does an ordinary individual in Pakistan gain by it emotionally or physically? Will Pakistan team up with Saudi Arabia to play the game in the Indian Ocean as the USA wants it to be played? With what results?

How can India keep herself uninfluenced by all that happens next door? Would an Islamic bomb, Chinese arms or Saudi-Libyan money in Pakistan necessitate an Indian response with the help of Russian power? Does the Indian individual, be he-Hindu, Sikh, Muslim, Christian, Jain or Buddhist, feel threatened by the idea of Pakistani power?

Perhaps this power-distorted Pakistani policy is irrelevant to the changes that are sure to transform the lives of the one billion people who live in this area. These are changes for the better, for the creation of intelligent, competent cooperation between all those who live here, for the proper utilization of the resources of this area and for the stabilization of the lives of the hungry, poor and wretched masses who today live without any hope.

It will be worthwhile to examine the situation in Europe. Divided between the Western and Eastern blocs, the communists and capitalists play a strange game of blind-man's buff. The NATO and Warsaw Pact blocs have come into being, and frontiers are protected with missiles, tanks, ships and planes. In reality, West Germany finds its best partners in trade and industry in the East Germans, the Poles, the Soviets, the Czechs and the Rumanians. France, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and Sweden have had the same experience. Involvement in the power games, owing to fear and ignorance, is wasteful and will not help to improve the lives of the people in Eastern or Western Europe. West European trade with communist countries is increasing, and this is inevitable in spite of their conflicting political interests. Recent meetings between West German and Soviet leaders confirm this.

The same is applicable to the situation in the Indian Ocean, with perhaps greater emphasis, as our poor, ignorant communities do not have the resources and money to play the power game. The oil-rich countries would not try to play it, for the Iranian example is too recent to be ignored. Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Kuwait or the Gulf-Emirates will only bring chaos and suffering on themselves if they attempt to emulate the Shah of Iran. Pakistan, if she gets involved in it, will ruin herself even more than she has in the recent past.

One wonders what definition of himself the Chinese individual would accept after the disastrous distortions and sudden changes during and after the Cultural Revolution, the purges and the changes in the slogans, and other thought-controlling stimuli that have bombarded him? Is he now left with any individuality at all? His contradictory and ever-changing expectations could have left him confused and bewildered. In the power struggles of Mao,

Lin Piao, Deng, Heng, Hua and others, the individual in China could become not only disillusioned and disappointed, but also bored and cynical. If the Chinese individual sees through this utterly useless charade, as he must have done, a new approach for the systematization of that society should emerge

Is this the fate of all societies? The original pristine purity of the struggle and sacrifices for liberty, humanity and equality gets lost in the games of power and profit, and the harassed and disillusioned people wake up to find themselves uninterested in this irrelevant drama The individual thus comes to disassociate himself from it all, though he has to continue to suffer under it and witness helplessly the waste of the resources of his society.

The most heartbreaking example of the wasteful involvement of an individual in the game of power is that of the Palestine Liberation Movement. The struggle in the Middle East is not only for the Palestinian's survival as an individual with a clearer and more satisfying definition of himself, but is also for the just cause of creating a society in the Middle East that is free of race, religion and caste conflicts, so that Jews, Christians, Muslims and others can live together. But the power conflicts of Arab States, the usual and unavoidable Super-Power interference, the vested interests of armament manufacturers and, most senseless of all, the ego and pride of individual Palestinian, Israeli and Arab leaders, have created a condition so serious that the very survival of the individual Palestinian, Arab, Israeli, Muslim, Christian, Jew, Maronite or independent is in great jeopardy. Ultimately, in the next ten years or earlier, Palestine, and a Palestinian personality will be established, and this will be totally different from the ideal for which thousands are suffering today.

Hunger for power necessarily leads to violence. If peace, harmony and stability is the objective, pursuit of power is not the way to reach it. Under whatever name it is paraded, power will always create conflict and tension, and the individual, though temporarily excited with a feeling of fulfilment, will soon get deflated and suffer more than before.

As mentioned above, India does not seem to have been involved very seriously in this game of power. Countries like the USA, the

USSR and China consider it dangerous to allow India to dream of influence and power even in the limited area of the Indian Ocean. The encouragement of India's partition and the creation of Pakistan was aimed at destroying this dream. China's attack across the Himalayas was meant to knock India out of this game before she started to think of participating in it.

The Indian ethos is a very complex one, and at certain levels of our consciousness, conflicting motivations create a state of non-action. But at other levels, thanks to the hunger for power, pride and profit, individuals can involve themselves in action with great gusto and cause unnecessary trouble.

As we are all involved in this power game which leads to war and killing, it will be worthwhile to consider whether a world without war is possible.

This is of immediate concern to us in the Indian Ocean where the power struggle between the Soviet Union, the USA and China could lead to a crisis.

The question is, can countries like India who do not want to get involved in this madness really keep away? Secondly, can India mitigate the effects of this struggle? When countries like Afghanistan, Iran, Somalia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Yemen and possibly others are getting not only involved, but also devastated as a result of this struggle, can countries like India do anything to help?

Russia's excuse for interference has always been that she is afraid of being encircled. The USA and China say that the Russian policy is expansionist. Those who are at the centre of power in these countries perhaps know the truth, but their over-reactions and propaganda confuse the people of their countries. It seems that those in power can never afford to speak the truth.

In view of increasing international tensions, over 80% of the people in West Germany now fear that World War III is inevitable. In France and Italy (and also in Poland and East Germany) the war neurosis is developing rapidly. Many feel that the psychological and physical conditions now are similar to those before World War II.

Can there be a world without the threat of war? Can involvement in the power struggle be avoided?

CHAPTER IV

THE INDIVIDUAL AND WAR



Is an individual, a human being, really peace-loving? No animal takes pride in, or even enjoys killing as much as man does. Man does not kill primarily for food, as animals do. An animal does not have the human ego, which feels threatened by the success of another. The territorial instinct in an animal relates to survival rather than to pride. Crueller than any animal, man has devised innumerable diabolical methods and implements of torture and killing, and built whole civilizations on conquests, wars and subjugation.

What is worse is the record that history provides of man's enjoyment of torture, loot and pillage, of battle and killing. The anthologies and epics, sagas and stories of every culture are replete with war and killings by Gods, Kings, heroes and revolutionaries. Even saints have been known to participate in and patronize war and violence. Literature, drama, music, paintings of war and killing continue to stimulate the mind of man, notwithstanding Hiroshima, Belsen, Auschwitz and Vietnam. The most depraved and perverse violence in cine films draws the largest audiences.

How then can the world of humans eschew war? Under what conditions would there be no threat of it? Is a "balance of terror" as it exists today the answer? Can a human, an individual, survive and function without being involved in pride, power-lust or fear? These are some of the questions that are relevant and must be asked.

The human psyche is involved in pride and power, of which violence, killing and domination are the outward expressions. Killing not only removes the threat to a self-assumed sense of identity but in the process enlarges it. The desire for self-perpetuation through forcible removal of threats to the ego is an important aspect of violence and war indulged in by humans.

With all the greed, pride, fear, anger, hate and power-lust in the modern world, and with armaments easily available, the threat of war, even in a country like India, seems to be imminent. If all this instability, deliberately or through stupidity, leads to a world war, life on this Earth may cease to exist. Man now has the technical knowledge and capacity to destroy the world a hundred times over.

Can we turn back from this brink of disaster? Confused, anxious and tense as we are, can we survive on such a brink indefinitely? Can such tension and anxiety become the normal condition of existence? What sort of a survival will it be?

Are we seriously worried about war? Or are we too stupid, or too busy with the day-to-day problems of life to give a thought to it? Perhaps we are, without our knowledge, deeply involved in it and contribute indirectly to this situation of war.

A number of us are anti-war and believe in peace and the brotherhood of man. But in reality, we actively contribute by our actions to strife, conflict and war. Very often it is in our own individual interest that inequality, poverty and the indiscriminate exploitation of man by man, and of nature by man, should continue. We may even be arrogantly proud of this exploitation and of our position in the pyramid of power.

If the situation today on this small planet of ours were not so desperately serious we could have laughed with Woody Allen when he quipped: "The world today is at the crossroads. One road leads

to utter hopelessness and despair, the other leads to utter destruction and extinction. God grant us the vision to choose the right road."

Paul Warnke, the former chief arms control negotiator for the USA has stated, "The enhanced-range Pershing missile could be in the men's room of the Kremlin in something like four minutes"

Two years ago the former President of the USA made an already nervous nation aware of how vulnerable it was to a surprise attack by Soviet missiles. Since then the USA has been walking a tightrope between the fear of striking first, and the fear of a preemptive strike by the USSR.

At Pugwash in 1981, one of the scientists showed up the meaninglessness of these fears, since there is no question of either side's surviving a nuclear war.

In 1960 the USSR and the USA had around 6,500 nuclear weapons systems. By 1983, if the disarmament and SALT II talks are still stalled, there would be 24,000 of them.

Bill Epstein, one of the experts, has stated, "Those acquired by one side will soon be copied by the other. Whatever devilish weapons are dreamed up by the military-industrial complex today become out-moded or outpaced and the profits grow through the waste of resources. Any perceived or assumed temporary advantage by either side is illusory in an age when each side holds the other hostage."

According to experts, a "destruction gap" exists between the two super-powers. What in fact this amounts to is that the USA can destroy every major Soviet city fifty times over, whilst the USSR can wipe out every major American one only thirty times!

In either case, all European cities will be devastated within 30 minutes of the pressing of the nuclear button. These losses are not taken into account in any of these calculations.

Richard Garwin, IBM research physicist and adviser to the Pentagon, writes about military spending thus: "The defence system is a bureaucracy, and how it spends its money depends not on military effectiveness, but on strenuous competition between bureaucrats and the industrial-political pressures that are often profit-oriented."

This defence spending, it is hoped, will ensure employment in distressed areas of the USA (plus profits to the armament pressure groups). Nearly 30% of the total industrial/scientific capacity of the USA is involved in this. Maintenance of armies, arms production (and the sale of arms to oil-rich countries in order to obtain oil) has become an unalterable aspect of the life of nations.

Obviously those who actually profit by making armaments, and those who are employed in the ancillary industries, have a vested interest in war. Those who seek power and profit for their Nation States: politicians, the heads of the armed forces, and even some scientists and research workers, are all involved in this. Not peace, but power and how to achieve it, is their concern. They all struggle for it, engaging themselves in war if necessary. They live by it. It is part of their culture, their civilization. Armament manufacturers and the military industrial complexes control and manipulate governments and politicians for their own survival and growth, and use finance, research and educational establishments for their own purposes. We are all involved in this system and profit by it, either materially or in emotional-cultural ways. The Temple, the Church, the Mosque, the Gurdwara and the Synagogue become involved in this violence at one stage or another, as in Iran or Egypt, Pakistan or Yemen. In the so called "advanced nations" the military-industrial complexes employ over 30% of the population. War provides these people with their livelihood and high standard of living This is also true of communist countries. One of the highest persons in an advanced country once said, partly seriously and partly in joke, that a certain range of armaments, submarines, radar, helicopters and guns had to be sold to a particular country irrespective of the consequences because employment (and profits) in his constituency (and therefore his political future) depended upon it! He was a civilized human being, and war and peace mattered to him. But he, as so many of us all the world over, was caught in a pattern of life that is totally distorted and crooked. With the best will in the world one does not know how to escape it. Our short term interests, be they vested, national, profit-oriented or emotional, seem always to weaken the prospects of our long-term survival. This conflict of interests,

today at least, is insoluble. Would a world-wide disaster wake us up?

It is said that the Vietnam War was prolonged by a couple of years to fulfil some of the electoral promises made to armament manufacturers! Armament manufacturing is the most wasteful (of resources and productive capacities), but also the most profitable (to the manufacturers) of all industrial ventures. It also builds up inflation. Prosperity and the high standards of living in many countries depend on the armaments industry. These countries will therefore have a vested interest in war. Between 1980-90, it is calculated that 100 billion worth of military aircraft will be sold to the third world countries alone. This means 50,000,000 jobs in the developed world. Modern weapons include atomic, electronic, chemical and biological ones. The manufacture of these not only provides employment, but also aims to fulfil the desire of individuals to see themselves as citizens of the most powerful, the greatest, the most revolutionary, or advanced nation. Even the poorest societies compete to achieve status through borrowed, loaned, or even dumped armaments.

The summer war exercises in September 1980 of the NATO and the Warsaw Pact countries involved 500,000 persons, thousands of airplanes, tanks, trains and ammunition. Only to prove their strength to each other the two blocs spent enough to give food, shelter and clothing for an indefinite period of time to 50,000 Asian or African families.

The search for identity as a powerful nation, for the creation of enemies whom one can hate, challenge and fight is supported in the name of patriotism by most of us. In Mussolini's Italy, Hitler's Germany, Nasser's Egypt, many of the so called intellectuals succumbed to the lure of power and glory. Leaders often maintain their position by glorifying war and the nation's power. Perhaps the adventure, the risk, the glory and grandeur of death fascinates the mind. How much of song, dance, drama, music, sculpture and poetry proclaims the sacrifices of heroes, and the purification of the land by their blood! Throughout the ages war seems to have fulfilled some inner urge, some need of man. Today

even anti-war films, drama, television shows and literature excite and attract the mind to war and violence.

War is also companionship and cooperation. A bond of friendship and understanding grow in common sacrifice and suffering. Warriors belong to a community which often transcends tribe country or culture. Respect and affection as between warrior and warrior binds even erstwhile enemies.

War and conquest have also brought different cultures and civilizations together, and, by the intermingling of conqueror and conquered, created new ones. The Roman, Greek, Egyptian and Babylonian conquests created new civilizations by absorption or through cross-fertilization of ideas and behaviour patterns. Sometimes the colonizer's culture was itself colonized. In India the Aryan conquest ultimately resulted in the Aryan absorption of major elements of the Dravidian culture. The Vedic Gods Indra and Varuna, and rituals and rites such as the *yadnya* or the *homa,* lost ground to pujas, temples and yoga, that are now the epitome of Hindu religious practice.

Today there are not a few who believe that a world without tension and conflict will be a very dull one. They say that in such a world, technology and science will stagnate and therefore progress will be slow. Self-satisfied, self-sufficient societies will be stagnant and boring. Is this so? It seems that "Ashram-Societies" attract only a small percentage of the population. How to recondition the mind which is tense and tends towards violence as a release seems to be an important question.

Can mutual profit and advantage and, therefore, respect and regard for the other person replace the urge for competition, power, domination and aggression?

This earth of ours is a small planet. Its resources are inadequate for the purpose of supporting a population of four billion. Quarrelling with each other and wasting resources in war and destruction will not help. To realize this a certain amount of insight, goodwill and self-discipline is necessary. These qualities would enable one to think and act with the understanding that the modern world of science and technology is a "one world" of inter-

dependent and interrelated parts, and that this 'one world' can no longer be divided and parcelled out into nations.

To live in this "one world" with insight one also requires empathy. An individual in this new world must be able to see his "self" reflected in all religions, races, cultures, languages and regions. To be complete, he must see that what he needs is not competition or domination, but cooperation and tolerance. To put this ideal into practice he requires competence and courage.

Life today is not simple as it was even twenty years ago. As we "progress" it becomes more and more complicated. This is because all human activities that need to be confined to a small restricted area, now operate on a worldwide level. We are all interlinked and interdependent and must live in cooperation with each other, for if all of us destroy "the other", we destroy ourselves.

One of the most difficult problems that has to be dealt with is that of the non-involvement or apathy of the individual towards these power and war games, and the possibility of annihilation that he faces. William Epstein, the former UN director of disarmament, and organizer of the Pugwash Conference in 1981, says, "in the 36 years since Hiroshima was destroyed by a small 14 kiloton atomic bomb the public has become afflicted with apathy and inertia. People are either bored or scared and benumbed into accepting the power and arms race as a fact of life."

It is only the individual who can deal with the problem of his threatened destruction—by casting off his apathy, fear and delusions. The scientists, philosophers and politicians at the Pugwash conference came to the conclusion that, "Consciousness raising between super-powers, scientists and politicians is essential for new treaty limitations on armaments, but the real solution will only be possible if the public throws off its apathy and organizes protests".

Nation states as centres of authority, power and pride have always created conflict. Civilized communities do not aspire to power. Man, the individual, is conditioned and compelled to identify himself with the state. It is the same in the case of "isms" and ideologies. The individual is encouraged or terrorized into doing what normally he would not have done. State control of the

mass media and secret police, and ignorance together with fear on the part of people make this possible.

In this new age, Nation states as they exist with their political and administrative power pyramids and their inertia, are totally ineffective in bringing about any harmony and cooperation between different group interests. These old, dilapidated institutions cannot create a world without war. They seem to be unable to even maintain an international equilibrium based on a balance of terror.

An individual must now see that this game of the nations, the game of power and destruction, has to be stopped or transcended. We cannot expect the same old stupid leaders and the same inefficient institutions to help us to get out of this mess.

Conflict leading to violence is inevitable as long as there is inequality and poverty. Previously when productivity was limited by the primitive instruments of production, inequality and poverty were accepted as inevitable and even divinely ordained Science and technology, and the capacity to produce goods and services in abundance, has altered all that. Individuals will no longer accept what they did in feudal days, or even fifteen or twenty years ago. Politicians and producers of goods and services promise the utopia of equality of consumption. The consumer revolution guarantees this.

Thus all societies will suffer from conflict, violence and war as long as there is inequality and poverty. Under the communist system of government these two are supposed to have been reduced if not eliminated. Yet even in those societies, there does not seem to be a tension-free relationship between authority (i.e., the centres of power and management) and the individual. Fear and terror still exist. There are secret police, restrictions on behaviour, travel, consumption, occupation and even thought. There is also too much self-justifying propaganda. This has led to a superficial acceptance of authority which, however, covers basic irresponsibility, corruption and frustration leading to cynicism. Besides, even the communist countries seem to be more concerned with building up power (justified as defence) than with peace. They are not far behind others in killing and aggression in the name of peace.

Coming back to India, can we really make an attempt to build a truly non-violent society based on a system of interdependence, mutual advantage and profit? Can we seriously attempt it in the various areas of this land itself?

On the foreign policy level, with intelligent competence and practical concern for those with whom we have to live and prosper, we can establish good relations between nations in the Indian Ocean area. This area then can and must be an area that opts out of the terror-power struggle of super and not so super powers.

Pious sentiments and good intentions alone will not create a world without war. Only the intelligence to avoid wars, or else intense suffering through experiencing it, will bring this about. If we choose the path of suffering through experience it will be a long and devastating one. After the destruction and suffering caused by World War II, there was a short-lived awakening into intelligence in some areas of the world. But in the last thirty years we, that is the Nation States, seem to have slipped back, and we are now worse off than we were in 1945, at the end of World War II.

It is the individual who, out of fear, expectation of favour or just laziness, supports the present pyramids of power. Centralized authority, be it democratic, socialist or totalitarian, cannot function effectively without his support.

The moment conditions become intolerable to a large number of individuals, the authority ceases to function.

The state control of communication, monopoly of employment opportunities and organizations such as the secret police, ensure that such systems are "tolerated" for a longer period of time than they would be in more open, free societies.

However, the most reassuring and at times inspiring experience today is to see how certain groups of individuals in various nation states react to this game. All over the world, including the communist countries, the horror of impending nuclear war is rousing the individual and making him act. Vietnam awakened millions in the USA to the futility and criminality of war and destruction. The awakening in Germany, France, Great Britain, Italy, Greece and Spain against nuclear re-armament gathers momentum. TV, radio and the press have contributed to this awakening. It is hop-

ed that the compulsions of peace and living together will inspire the individual to act outside the framework of relationships between nations, which always function within the restricted rules of the games of power.

It is this awakening of the individual to the realities of his survival that may ultimately make war impossible.

CHAPTER
V

THE INDIVIDUAL, INEQUALITY, EXPLOITATION AND VIOLENCE



A great deal has been written throughout the ages about non-violence. Ahimsa, non-hurting or not-killing, has been the inspiration for many cults. Saints and martyrs who have non-violently suffered exploitation and violence, have been held up as ideals of human behaviour.

Life is an interrelated and interdependent whole. Only those capable of holistic vision can see that to destroy, harm, mutilate, exploit, plunder or pollute any part of this unity is to harm oneself. Even those who do see this often do not know how to stop others from perpetrating violence and exploitation.

Mahatma Gandhi used truth and non-violence as means to fight inequality and exploitation. The world was amazed as well as attracted by the results and the way in which they were achieved. Martin Luther King in America and Danilo Dolci working in the areas where the Mafia operated in Sicily used similar methods. Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan gives a shining example of attempts to face violence and exploitation the Gandhian way. In Tibet

some of the followers of the Dalai Lama still attempt to pursue the path of love and non-violence when faced with the mindless aggression of communist China.

The Mahatma started his experiments in South Africa, where now a mighty battle rages to overcome the ravages of the violence and exploitation that apartheid entails. The African National Congress has tried hard and assiduously over the past fifty years to face organized, ruthless and efficient violence through non-violent means. Many in South Africa are now giving up the attempt, as they think it has not succeeded.

Struggle, violent or non-violent, is endless Temporarily an equilibrium or a compromise is reached. Then the dynamics of socio-economic-cultural forces compel new arrangements or compromises.

The question is whether it is rational and effective to pursue tolerant and non-violent methods under all conditions.

Impatience, anger, greed, and more often sheer stupidity lead to violence when better results in bringing about equilibrium and stability could have been reached through non-violence. Recognizing the mutuality of advantage and the inevitability of human interdependence leads to the pursuit of the non-violent path.

In the non-violent approach there is no fear. With this approach one sees the situation clearly as it is, and not through the spectacles of racial, religious or national prejudice.

In South Africa the fear of being swamped or polluted, the fear of losing pure identity has distorted the vision. Yet even in South Africa the inevitability of the races all living together is being realized by many, and after a great deal of unnecessary suffering, more and more will inevitably see the light of reason.

The identity of an individual under stress and faced with violence and exploitation undergoes a basic change. He is not able to establish a balanced relationship with his fellow humans or his environment. Inequality and exploitation must be removed if the individual is to survive. No society between whose individual members there is an ever-growing disparity of living conditions can reach a state of equilibrium. Administrative or political organizations utilized by vested interests often accentuate these dis-

parities, and this can cause civil war. Often, the administrative and political systems maintain their power by sophisticated and unethical methods. South Africa is the supreme example of this. Through total control of the mass media, through secret police, espionage and patronage, it seems that inequality and exploitation can be allowed to continue for a very long time. The communist systems have attempted to bring about some sort of equality through the very same violent means. The communists seem to have succeeded in bringing about a greater amount of physical equality as regards food, clothing, occupation, shelter, etc., but have not yet produced a society without stress, fear or cynicism. In effect these violent methods aimed at bringing about stability seem counter-productive. The most recent explosions in Poland (1981-82) illustrate this.

The intelligent way of reducing stress is the non-violent way. But it requires patience. It also requires a cadre of capable, well-motivated workers at key points in the socio-economic structure who will be able to take a comprehensive view of events, and respond to problems in a prompt and dynamic way.

Coexisting with those who encourage violence, anger and hate for their profit or power, there must be those who can see beyond these narrow motives and can guide individuals to a better life. Individuals are required who are free of prejudices, able to consider a problem from many angles simultaneously, and who will be able to visualize clearly a realistic future.

Mahatma Gandhi's type of non-violent struggle could succeed if the individual is willing and able to reduce his needs, and to live in self-sufficiency through his own individual work and effort, independent and unaffected by the power of the state. Nowhere today does this seem possible. Attempts to establish such independent communities are being made in North America, Europe, and even in Africa. Their value and importance from the point of view of basic transformation is yet uncertain.

In South Africa, owing to overpopulation in the Bantustan area, individuals have had to emigrate to the white areas for survival, however miserable and undignified it may be. Homeless, rootless

and hopeless as they are, it is astonishing how placid they remain under the greatest of provocations.

Outside South Africa, in Malagasy, Mauritius, Mozambique, Botswana, Zimbabwe (Rhodesia), Zambia and Malawi, the individual can survive only with the approval or tacit permission of South Africa. For the employment abroad of their nationals, the transport of their raw materials or food, and the sale of their raw materials and minerals, these countries are totally dependent on white South Africa. South Africa is an enormously powerful user, producer and transporter of wealth. Over the years the whites, with single-minded, ruthless efficiency, have built up an economic machine that is comparable in its power to that of any of the European countries.

But the moment the first step is taken away from the circle of apartheid, the whole socio-economic-cultural structure of South Africa will collapse. Almost everyone in Southern Africa is aware of this. The whites naturally are afraid — but not all the whites. Many amongst them, even the Boers, see the truth now.

This change is going to be one of the greatest dramas ever enacted on earth. The hitherto suppressed Africans, trying to change the course of history when all the financial-economic-industrial powers of the West, with their military machines, are against them, are going to shake the foundations of the established order.

The Cubans, the Russians, the Chinese and the Japanese, all are involved in this battle, for various political, strategic and economic reasons. It is as if their very survival depends on what happens there. The Europeans and Americans are all there with their plans, prospects, and profit-power motives . All these plans have to be constantly adjusted to the realities of the situation.

Considering the situation in Southern Africa, what we may call Black Africa, it is astonishing to see how many people, black, white or brown, are capable of seeing life, as it changes around them, as a whole, a unity. Nelson Mandela, Julius Nyerere and Kenneth Kaunda are not exceptions. They reflect a general hope and a strong trend towards a future of cooperation and the creation of relaxed relationships

What happened in Ethiopia and Somalia need not happen in Southern Africa, unless a big or small power game brings in outside factors of destruction. Even in a country like Kenya and in Uganda after Idi Amin, it is realized by the intelligent and the courageous, that to make developments and adjustments in Africa, the people need not involve themselves in the power games of the big or the small, however profitable this involvement may be in the short term.

Black Africa as it emerges from its tribal, feudal past, seriously seeks a new identity. Jomo Kenyatta and Leopold Senghor have been the path-finders in search of what they called "Negritude" — Negroness. This "Black-consciousness" has in Africa and USA taken a very aggressive attitude bordering on violence.

This is to be understood as a phase, a normal response to a new perspective. The transformations in the socio-economic-political-cultural life of the Blacks all over the world have been so rapid that an urgent endeavour was inevitable to hold on to some clear definition of the black individual, as distinct from all the non-blacks who have power, money, history, and so-called culture. Sociologists, psychologists, writers, poets and painters in the Black-consciousness and Negritude movements feel this need and have expressed it in their soul-searching writings.

This urgency to preserve a black identity need not take a violent course. Africa and the Africans seem to possess a more profound and human response to the multifarious challenges that they face than many other races and cultures have demonstrated. Notwithstanding the race-riots in many parts of the world and the guerillas and commandos now functioning around South Africa, the experience in Kenya after Mau Mau, Zimbabwe after Smith, and in other areas of Africa, indicates that the Africans would happily be accommodating and create new and better relationships quickly, forgiving the erstwhile conquerors, exploiters and arrogant power-holders.

Conflicts, tensions and violence threaten not only individuals in Africa, but also those in the Arab countries, Asia, Latin America, and even in Europe. The Basque struggle in Spain and the five hundred year struggle in Ireland is partly due to the incapacity of

people to accept new identities forced on them by conquest or socio-economic change.

An extreme case of the identity crisis leading to unprecedented, individual suffering is the retreat to fundamentalism, the search for security in the simple, puritanical relationships of bygone ages. Frightened and confused, the fundamentalist wants to survive in the security of a symbolic womb where no stress of new adjustment is necessary. But fundamentalism, whether Islamic, Christian (Born Again Movements), Hindu, Judaic or other, is a passing phase, and will not be able to satisfy individuals in this dynamic age of change.

Involvement in property and ownership of land, houses and resources have created tensions, exploitation, conflict and violence throughout the ages. Both the individual who possesses, and he who does not, feel threatened and resort to hate and acts of violence that they insist are "defensive".

Throughout the ages philosophers, saints and political revolutionaries, have dreamt of creating societies in which ownership of land, houses, means of livelihood, factories, mines, etc. would not involve the individual. This non-involvement in possession would (they presumed) create conditions of cooperation, harmony and happiness.

Mahatma Gandhi advocated the "trusteeship" principle to help stop exploitation and to create conditions of cooperation between workers, managers and capitalists. The trusteeship principle presupposes a certain emotional and intellectual condition which can create "trust" between the parties concerned. It can work when both, or all the parties concerned have the same aims, e.g., maximizing profit or maintaining the stability of a system through an acceptance that the benefits are mutual. The feeling must be present that all the parties in the game will gain through cooperation.

The attitude towards possession and property would be a totally different one in a society where the trusteeship principles operates. Property and the means of production in such a society would not be owned by anyone (not even the State or the workers) but be used for the most efficient production of goods and services. There

would be no ownership, but only use of resources for creating wealth.

But the trusteeship principle will fail to work if relationships in the community are vitiated by party or power considerations or by a bureaucratic, dogmatic approach.

The communist approach was similar in its ideological purity to the trusteeship principle, but this purity was lost when bureaucracy took over.

The most compelling experiment in this field, (which is yet to be properly evaluated) is that of the Chinese communes, in which property was to be used to create an interrelated community of individuals.

The Chinese experiment was, perhaps, in its original conception, an attempt to create an atmosphere in which the individual would choose to live as a member of a community, disciplining his needs and desires, motivated by the hope of finding security in this way. The Kibbutz system in Israel also had a similar objective. Today these objectives seem to have been washed away either by the country's desire for power or by the undisciplined growth of individual wants and needs. Can a similar experiment be more successful in India?

Shri Vinoba Bhave's attempts to create the right climate for the individual to realise the "fact of life", as he put it, that all land belongs to God (*sub bhoomi Gopal ki*), did not succeed, in spite of the Hindu and Buddhist philosophical and religious traditions of *anasakti* (non-attachment), and *tyaga* (renunciation) by which people in India are habituated to swear.

Did his attempts fail because not enough goods and services could be produced to satisfy the basic needs of the individual through the application of this concept of non-ownership of property alone? Sharing land and property or considering factories as the common property of workers, manager and shareholders cannot alone increase wealth and satisfy the increasing hunger and the basic needs of a population that is growing at a catastrophic rate. The ever-growing pressures of consumerism require technology and resources that are not always available within the geographic boundaries of even a Nation State, let alone a community.

The higher the level of consumption of goods and services, the larger the area over which the production-transport-consumption system has to operate. Ultimately, as is the case today, the whole world, the global village, becomes the field of operation. For the trusteeship principle to operate over such a wide field is not easy. The socio-economic-political-cultural compulsions are highly complicated, and, as can be seen today, even the most sophisticated techniques cannot easily bring about any rationality in the organization and management of the world economy.

* * *

Inequality and exploitation are possible only when there is incapacity, personal or financial, and ignorance. Inadequate capacity to produce goods and services owing to a lack of money, education or proper motivation and inadequate and wrong inputs (such as, say, poor irrigation or the wrong fertilizers for a farmer) are the basic causes of inequality and exploitation. To try and remove these causes is the intelligent way to deal with stress and conflict. This takes time, unless the political and administrative machinery is free of corruption and power struggles, and control is not in the hands of those who have a vested interest in the status quo All over the world today it is the experience that there are strict limits within which the political and administrative machinery can help to lessen stress and remove inequality.

The British Labour Party made a colossal attempt through the Welfare State to remove inequality and exploitation after World War II. In France, Germany and Italy, the approach was somewhat different. When the individual is aware that inequality or exploitation can be removed through the existing politico-administrative machinery, he will be patient. In most countries, however, this is not so, and violent reactions to inequality and exploitation become inevitable.

It is remarkable how comparatively easily, and with not too devastating an amount of violence, the colonial system with its inequalities and exploitation was ended after World War II. India was the acknowledged pioneer in this. Many wonder whether it

was non-violence alone that gained independence for India, or whether it was made possible by the changed mood of the British people after the war, and the realization that an unwilling empire was a financial and administrative burden too great for impoverished post-war Britain. The fact that the British Labour Party, with its declared anti-colonial principles, was in power in 1947, was certainly a deciding factor. If India had been a colony of South Africa, of Hitler's Germany, Mao's China or Stalin's Russia, would non-violence or an appeal to such principles have worked ? The fates of Tibet, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland come to the mind as negative examples.

The wrong economic, educational and administrative motivations, such as an inordinate and disproportionate desire for power or profit, accentuate inequality and exploitation, and create conditions of violence in which the individual suffers. Apart from Idi Amin's Uganda, or Emperor Bokassa's empire, Iran, Argentina, Brazil, Peru, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay are the more recent examples of this. So were Indonesia and Egypt. It is as if inequality, exploitation and corruption are built into the very process of post-colonial change.

Having shouted "non-violence" for three decades before independence, and having imagined that Indians were a unique people "divinely chosen" to live in ashram societies in simplicity and prayer, on our becoming independent, the actual, perhaps more realistic, target set before the Indian nation was the creation of a "strong, stable, progressive, modern Socialist State". The motivation was never the creation of non-violent gram-rajyas, self-sufficient and stable. Even before independence, Gandhiji's programmes had never been taken seriously. He was used by those who were more attracted by the power game than by the ideals of a non-violent society. For the majority of the so-called freedom fighters, the urge was towards the creation of an Indian society that would be something similar to the society in Great Britain; (then to all appearances glamorous, powerful, rich, and full of the good things of life), with a few verses from the Upanishads and the Bhagavad Geeta thrown in for good measure !

The kind of feudalistic consumer society that has now emerged in India, managed and manipulated by small groups of individuals with the help of their contacts, is far removed from the Gandhian dream. The Indian individual of today seems to be as competitive, cruel and uncivilized as an individual anywhere else. It may be argued that he is so because of his life in overcrowded cities and impoverished villages, a life full of uncertainties, where the political and administrative systems are incapable of intelligent action, and where the educational processes are aimless and corrupt. But is this confused, unhappy and frustrated individual a product of overcrowding and poverty alone? Can a change for the better in the exterior circumstances bring about a fundamental change in the individual? Or must the individual change first, to bring about better circumstances?

CHAPTER
VI

THE INDIVIDUAL HIS WANTS AND DESIRES



Man becomes an individual because of his will to exist, his urges and desires and the capacity to fulfil them in the environment in which he is born. This environment, with all the physical, mental and social conditions, helps or hinders him in his survival as an individual.

Society, with its various institutions and organizations, social, political, economic and cultural, is expected to protect the individual and his survival and fulfilment as a member of the society.

But in fact, as we have seen, from time immemorial, whatever the initial aims of the State and the various social, political, educational and cultural organizations, they ultimately become the means for a few people to acquire and wield power. The intoxication with power is such that those who control it are stimulated by it, and forget the main purpose of their organization, which is to help and protect individual members of society.

If we look at the various institutions around us today anywhere in the world, we will see that much of their work is involved in ensuring their own survival. Seventy-five per cent of the expenditure in an organization such as an embassy abroad is pure waste

from the point of view of the individual in the country represented, for whose benefit the embassy is supposed to be working. The glamour, prestige and sense of power which the Ambassador or High Commissioner in an embassy holds, though perhaps contributing to his country's image, does not help the citizen of his country very much in his struggle for physical and emotional survival. This is true in varying degrees of other national institutions or organizations.

The world today cries out for more resources to give employment, build houses, produce more food and open more hospitals and schools. But in spite of this, too great a part of the limited resources is wasted on armaments. Those in power are caught in a web of contradictions and confusion from which they cannot extricate themselves. The many disarmament conferences, with the hypocrisy of the delegates and their pronouncements, only serve to show up the contradictions.

In the old days when life was simpler, and there was no shortage of land because population was at a reasonable level, the struggle for survival was straightforward though hard. The capacity of a society to produce goods and services determined what and how much the individual in the society desired and consumed. The pressure to conform was greater; the individual usually followed the behavioural pattern of his family, caste, religion or tradition. The stricter traditions and customs of his caste, religion or family put restrictions on his desires and thus on his consumption.

An individual then could have an independent individuality only within strict limits. The same stimuli day after day allowed a very narrow range of desires, and pleasures were simple. Even food was simple, since there was little variety. With limited productive capacity owing to lack of water and to primitive machines and technology, an individual survived at the subsistence level and desired little else, because he was not aware of what else there could be to wish for.

This limitation on the production of goods and services not only automatically controlled desire and consumption but also established an interdependence, and often the system of barter,

between the various groups in a society, such as between the smith, carpenter, farmer, cobbler, mason, etc. Village communities in India kept themselves going in this way for thousands of years; kings or conquerors made little difference to their lives, which were based on the mutually profitable exchange of goods and services. This created the right conditions for the continuity and stability of the community. It was not external authority, the government, or a rich trader, but the community itself that maintained law and order.

A self-adjusting auto-discipline gradually emerged and was maintained through customs and religion and through the acceptance of certain hierarchical norms such as caste, priorities in rituals, etc. It kept the balance in society, though in the perspective of today's dynamic changes, the society whose stability it maintained was a stagnant one.

Certain castes dominated the system. Custom and ritual sanctioned this. But whatever the caste of the individual in this system, he knew who he was, where he belonged and what was expected of him as his duty, dharma, to the society, and what he could expect out of it as his due.

This system could work while the production and consumption of goods and services was at a low level and while the individual concerned had no alternative, that is, no real choice regarding the work he did or what he consumed, and thus had to be satisfied with his lot. In a feudal, tribal, caste-divided society, choice is circumscribed by taboos, do's and don'ts, and the individual accepts this as he sees no escape or alternative. In this system, position, prestige and profit were unequally distributed. There was a hierarchy of authority. And yet, because of mutual dependence and traditions, the system continued to function with each individual established in his limited groove. There was no way out of it.

Thus the denial of the local water wells to a group was tolerated, though resented, because no authority outside the community could help remedy the injustice. Even after thirty years of independence, and though the caste system has been disintegrating for the last century, the picture is changing all too slowly and

involves much pain and suffering. Even the new and powerful forces of urbanization and industrialization have influenced it only marginally, and that too mainly in the areas that were already urban.

This self-enclosed, almost autarchic system in India started to disintegrate when the highly centralized authority of the British could effectively intervene and the individual felt that he could successfully appeal over the decisions or dictates of his community.

The system disintegrated more rapidly when goods manufactured outside the community, say in Bombay, Calcutta, Birmingham or Glasgow, started to pour in, disturbing the economic pattern that had made the community self-sufficient and self-enclosed.

Transport, communications and industrialization accelerated this process No longer did the individual have "no choice" as to his vocation or his wants and desires He came to feel the thrill of freedom, in the cities, from the taboos and restrictions of caste, tribe or custom. This was one of the attractions of the urban areas to which economic compulsions drove him.

In the last 50 years, industrialization and urbanization have turned the Euro-American, Japanese and Russian societies upside down more rapidly than ever before. The status of an individual in these societies is now totally different from what it was in the beginning. The new techniques of production and distribution, the variety of goods and services and never-ending spiral of desires have created a new set of relationships and also new tensions and conflicts between groups in those societies.

Witness the riots among the Blacks in the USA in the sixties, fuelled by their exposure, through the media, to the material comforts they could not afford.

Life in this age of science, technology and consumerism is exciting and stimulating. Unless the mind of man is stimulated or excited to desire more and more, this new system cannot work. To keep it going, the individual must have desires and strive to acquire the money, position or power to satisfy them. All this gives the momentum, speed, direction and vitality for the change and "progress" in this new society. Instead of an individual who formerly accepted, tolerated and suffered a system which put restric-

tions on his desire for and consumption of goods and services, there is now the individual who feels that "freedom" is at hand to enjoy.

Not only can he desire more, but he is also provoked to do so by propaganda and advertisement, by politicians and manufacturers. A man or woman who uses a special soap or toothpaste or face powder is projected as being happy or successful. Under the new consumer system the individual is under pressure to change his identity, i.e., the whole range of his responses and behaviour.

The effect of all this on the traditional societies of India that still exist can be devastating. Starved of and prohibited from enjoying a good life for generations, the individual now delights in the change, breaks all taboos and gives up all the responsibilities he owed to his caste, religion and family. The ever present generation-gap becomes wider. This change is so rapid that it is noticeable from day to day.

This rapid change is taking place only within the hitherto tribal-, caste- or tradition-bound groups. Relationships between a mother and daughter or son; between a mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, or a husband and wife, are changing radically. It is as if no member of the group really depends any longer on the protection and identity the family or the group affords.

Yet the breaking down of barriers between groups, the Dalits, Harijans, aboriginals, Muslims, Christians, Marathas, Brahmins, etc., is slow and reluctantly accepted. Inter-caste, inter-tribal or inter-lingual marriages, or mixed social-cultural associations are yet unusual.

This is a strange but understandable contradiction which will be resolved, as it has been to a certain extent in Kenya and Tanzania, when in new generations, members of different groups acquire similar work-skills and training and strive for common objectives side by side in business, service or industry.

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All the older traditions, Hindu, Christian, Buddhist, Islamic and Judaic, put forth formulae for reducing stimulations to the point

of zero. Zero experience (shunya) was nirvana or bliss. Today we go to the opposite extreme, and continuously stimulate the mind to a stage of stupefaction through a variety of incessant sensations. The media of propaganda, both private and of the state, bombard the poor individual with words, symbols and slogans which not only confuse and exhaust him but tend to turn him into an automaton, programmed to act according to the propaganda.

Can an individual survive, that is, maintain a clear identity, in spite of this bombardment, and simultaneously cling to the religious, caste, tribal restrictions on behaviour?

With a threat to his identity under such circumstances the individual returns to, or is made to return to a form of fundamentalism.

Islamic societies today in Libya, Iran and Indonesia feel the urge to revert to a fundamentalism that would bring the individual back to the old traditional and restricted way of life. Fundamentalism in pluralist societies like India presents a curious picture. On the one hand, people are turning away from traditional restrictions, and on the other, women are being prohibited from going to films, as in certain Muslim communities. Fundamentalism in isolated Hindu-Buddhist or Christian groups in India is less noticeable, because it is hidden behind double standards or sheer deceit.

Often an individual tries a synthesis between the scientific and the religious, the modern and the traditional and achieves a restless in-between, a twilight zone of rituals, superstition and ignorance, and of neurosis and generation gaps.

The uncertainties, the insecurity, the severe and cruel competition of this restless new age often compel an individual, whether Hindu, Buddhist, Christian or even an unbeliever, to seek solace with Gurus, or in temples or pilgrimages, if not with pills, drugs or sex.

With the technological and economic advance in India, however slow it may be, the number of people taking solace in gurus and their philosophies is increasing. This fact is an index of the insecurity they feel as familiar norms disappear.

The race for the so-called better life is becoming more and more cut-throat and cruel in countries like India, where material benefits are scarce. In this situation, temples and gurdwaras, churches and mosques play an increasing part in the socio-cultural life of the individual. Does this mean that revivalism is an inevitable reaction to the consumer revolution ? Will the rampant desires stirred by the consumer revolution kill the capacity of the individual to survive as a balanced, sane and happy person ?

Should there then be restraints on desires ? What should they be, and who should enforce them ? The State, through taxes, propaganda or control through fear ? Or will social, i.e. public opinion, the way of life in a society itself, impose constraints on human desire ? We have had, in the present century, many examples of what happens to societies in which selfish individuals yield to their pleasure-profit-power urges and bring the society under great strain. Individual and group interests, often divergent, clash, creating class conflicts. Individuals and groups often use violence and corruption to attain and hold power in order to eliminate competition.

The struggle is cruel and inhuman but incessant. We see it all around us today. From Latin America, the continent of perpetual revolutions, urban guerillas and corrupt politicians, to China, where the dream of a community life without stress seems now to have faded, the picture is the same. The individual is lost.

Indeed, it seemed at one time that China would show a way out of this crisis in which rising demands and inadequate capacity to satisfy them create a life of stress and struggle. Companionship together with a disciplined and balanced equation between production and consumption, would, it seemed, create conditions in which an individual could live a relaxed life and his relationships with his fellow humans, with Nature, and with the organizations and institutions of society would be mutually beneficial.

The cultural revolution during the past fifteen-twenty years was supposed to eliminate power struggles and stabilize community life. But it seems now that this objective is being put aside for the building up of modern China where the individual will suffer the same stress and strain, and maybe the same pangs of depersonali-

zation as anywhere else. Did China give up this dream because she had to face the reality of the power struggle, or because of consumer pressures? It seems that no longer in China is an individual willing to restrict his desires or consumption to what a commune can produce.

It seems that the bug of "consumerism" is highly infectious. In Eastern Europe, where the communist system of managing the production-distribution-consumption of goods and services is highly inefficient, these pressures have necessitated modifications in the dogma of communism, as in Hungary and Poland where, in 1981 and after, a drama of great significance to us has unfolded.

In the Soviet Union, through strict censorship and party control, individual desires and expectations have, it seems, been curbed. The good life is available to those who conform. But even in this workers' paradise human desires cannot be controlled without innumerable labour camps and the constant fear of the secret service. Even so corruption and the black market are rampant. The pressures are now increasing. Those who disagree with the system are openly challenging it. How long will the individual in communist dictatorships survive under these pressures? What is his relationship with those in authority? Is he still excited by the thought of the power and glory of the state? What kind of individual survives in such circumstances? If his desires are not satisfied today, surely he will refuse to conform to the system tomorrow, or at least the day after.

The typical individual in today's world is isolated, and has no interest in anything apart from his earnings, and not necessarily in the way he gets them.

Unless he is self-employed and is motivated by profit, his physical or mental involvement in his work is minimal. He has no sense of dedication and is, therefore, in constant conflict with his work, his fellow human beings and the organization where he is employed. He can never feel fulfilled and will therefore suffer from boredom and *angst*.

A study made in North America in 1981 brought to light an amazing situation, in which 87% of "workers" (white- or blue-collared) actually hated their jobs.

In this state of hopeless boredom and ennui, brought about by incessant movement and noise, by the struggle for existence and loneliness, the individuality of a human being dies. Take a look at the great urban areas anywhere in the world today – Japan, China, the USSR, India, Indonesia, Europe or the USA. Man, the individual, harassed and anxious, is lost in concrete jungles Though he craves companionship and community life, he leads a life of isolation.

Is there a way out? Can we go back to the beginning? To the spinning wheel? The wooden plough? To the waterwheel?

Should the energy, vitality and the tremendous power of science and technology to do good and better our lives be abandoned? Science and technology have brought us the concept of hygiene and given us better health They have also made it possible for millions to have houses, clothes, food and employment, for which they could never have hoped before.

If we want to dismantle this edifice, which now crushes the individual, what do we put in its place? Where do we go from there?

Do we start with organizations of power, the State, the Nation, the political parties and their leaders?

Do we concentrate on production? Or do we leave all to the desire of man and the stimulations of his mind that seem to have brought about this devastating state of affairs?

Surely, unless we approach the problem seriously, we will remain on this endless path of confusion and suffering.

Let us recapitulate some of the ideas, problems, approximations we have discussed so far. Firstly, how does an "individual" survive? For his survival in a society he not only depends on but gets involved in the power-profit conflicts of individuals, dynasties and nations. This involvement which the individual had hoped would enable him to enjoy security and happiness, in reality leads him to greater insecurity and misery, and loss of personality. In fact he – his individuality – does not survive.

Next we have seen how the identity of an individual in a modern society has undergone a basic change. Instead of the security and identity of family traditions, caste, tribe or nation,

an individual in the modern techno-economic-consumer society is stimulated in his wants and desires by the dynamics of production-consumption for profit, and these stimulated desires can condition his personality. He survives by the grace and mercy of industrial-financial profit-oriented organizations.

The third question was, can society stabilize itself under the conditions of ceaseless stimulation of the individual that seem to be the case in consumer societies? Can an individual survive the strain and stress of such constant stimulation? Can he remain in a perpetual state of competition and, therefore, of conflict, without breaking down completely?

A human being desires relaxed, harmonious, happy relationships with his environment, with other fellow humans, in order to survive as a sane individual He likes, in fact, craves, to live in a cultured community without fear. Therefore, constantly stimulated desires cannot create conditions of harmony and happiness for the individual to survive.

Fourthly, science and technology have presented humans with the possibility of satisfying all rational needs and desires. It has also provoked the greed for power and profit. Unless a human can control this greed, the dynamics and the sheer power of science and technology will destroy the individual.

The very power and vitality of science and technology necessitates the individual's learning new disciplines to control both himself and this new force that is transforming all relationships. It is science and technology that has made possible the fearful exploitation of the seas, forests, rivers and land, that has made total environmental disaster a distinct possibility in the foreseeable future. It is the distorted use of science and technology that has brought about the horrific arms race. The individual today thus seems on the sure path to extinction.

The present political, administrative and educational institutions seem totally incompetent to deal with this crisis. The very institutions meant to manage and systematize societies are distorting the social, cultural and economic life of millions, and instead of providing security, are wasting billions in useless strife, and

creating chaos. What kind of institutions can replace these, and how?

Further, where, when and how can the revolution for the transformation start? At what level – with the individual or with the State? Will it be violent and cause much suffering? Can the awakening of intelligence which enables the individual to see the inter-relations of various groups and various processes come about without his suffering first? How many individuals must be "awakened" to make any difference to a society which is on the wrong course of conflict and exploitation?

Finally, as science, technology, and consumer pressures have made this small planet of ours one global village, an individual will have to awaken to his responsibilities in order to survive as a world citizen and play his rightful part

CHAPTER
VII

THE AWAKENING OF THE INDIVIDUAL



In wishing the survival of the individual we must ask ourselves what it is that we want. How would we like an individual to survive?

Is our objective his material progress alone; that is, the greater stimulation of his mind with a wider and wider range of desires, and obviously increased production to satisfy them? Is all social, economic, spiritual and cultural endeavour to be geared to this end? We say that individuals in Japan, Germany, America and Europe have progressed, meaning that they can satisfy all their desires, provided they work and earn the money for this. Thus the individual motivated by desire in a progressive society will produce goods and services if he is efficient. He will earn enough to satisfy his desires. But he will also create stress and strain for himself and society if his objective is only limited to material progress

In a desire-oriented (consumer) society, centralization of the system of production, distribution and consumption is essential. The more centralized the system is, the more efficient it can be.

Authority, the government and the finance, research, develop-

ment, social welfare, and even cultural organizations have to be centrally managed.

Human behaviour is then governed by profit, production, quality, price, variety and quantity – not by the peace or happiness of the individual. These are incidental.

The more centralized the production process gets, the bigger it becomes. We have the gigantic multinationals of today which supersede, manipulate, and even dominate Nation States. The individuals running them, and those who work in them, are no longer only Indians, Germans, Japanese, Africans, Americans or French, no longer either Hindus or Muslims, Christians or Jews. They are all technicians with different ways of life, different objectives and motivations from those of the groups to which they belong by birth. As production, distribution and consumption become world-wide, the individuals who are directly involved in multinational organizations develop distinct personalities, motivations, outlooks, jargons and ways of functioning, and different priorities. Even their speech is in many ways "international". Few beyond their esoteric circle can understand it. In the higher reaches of science and technology, such as in nuclear physics, electronics, computer science, biochemistry, marine biology and hundreds of other new disciplines, the terminology has now become so complicated that it is incomprehensible and mystifying to the non-scientists. Thus we now have with us a new group of human beings who speak the unknown language of science. The hypotheses, the ideas, the approximations which in fact relate to human beings or their relationship with nature are no longer understandable (except in the form of science-fiction !) to the ordinary individual. The common man, though his life will be radically affected by all this speculation and discovery, is totally excluded from it. The growing needs and greeds, new techniques and new organizations demand new forms of competence and executive capacities, new kinds of disciplines and training (or conditioning) which differentiate and isolate those who help to run this new system from the multitudes who enjoy or benefit from it.

Today's interdisciplinary seminars or conferences demonstrate the isolation of this new elite from the "masses" all over the world.

Even in the UN organizations, where the world civil (and scientific) services try to function efficiently in the interests of the masses, the gap between those who "serve" and those whom they serve widens every day.

In the face of such specialization of knowledge, and the control by a few people of our destinies, what is the role of the vast, unaware majority that will be affected by it? What alterations do we need to make in our attitudes and priorities?

In this new world, our capacities are often inadequate, and our motivations and objectives often mixed up — as in India where often we do not know whether we would rather live in our tribal, caste and religious groups, or grow out of them, and have a Gandhian society of self-sufficient villages, or build a powerful modern consumer society.

Reason will surely tell us that if we want to have a consumer society, that is, to produce the goods and services that we desire, we must organize human effort on a worldwide basis. Local, municipal governments do play a role in this organization but a strictly limited one. Irrational emotional and psychological involvement in the idea of the Nation State is irrelevant and absurd in this context.

Today's variety of food, clothing, shelter, music and literature, forms of government, television, radio and politics are all a result of the cross-fertilization of experiences and experiments from the four corners of the globe. From traffic lights to economic planning, from cafeterias to production systems, there is a very wide and rapidly growing range of fields in which experience is being exchanged. Hindus, Muslims and Christians; Africans, Asians, Europeans, Russians and Chinese are all stimulated by and getting habituated to the same "culture" through the media. Indian dance, food and yoga are popular in the USA and Europe; whilst jazz, the Beatles, Karate, Ikebānā, and acupuncture are capturing the imagination of individuals in Bombay or Nairobi. Without a wide variety of experiences the individual of today does not feel fulfilled or complete. On an intellectual and emotional level the individual now survives not *in isolation or opposition*, but by adding

to his own culture the variety that there is in others, through absorption, understanding and imitation.

Consider how universal the habit of travel to foreign countries has become today. The individual is avid for stimulation by new and varied experiences and by different cultural, intellectual and physical involvement with happenings outside his own country.

However, the stress of constant change, whether pleasant or unpleasant, takes its toll. Cases of high blood pressure, heart diseases, ulcers, and mental illness are caused by the stress and strain of urban living, pollution, lack of community life and a sense of not belonging anywhere, which are the conditions of life today.

An individual in these modern times is beset with contradictions that seem insoluble. In order to satisfy his stimulated wants and needs, he must acquire the competence and skills to function in a techno-scientific consumer society. In the process of acquiring these capacities, and through their proper (or improper) use, he breaks the bonds of the old feudal, tribal, caste or religious life which afforded him not only security but a sense of belonging and a well defined identity. Outside these old bonds, the do's and don'ts which told him exactly what to do and also when and how, the individual feels lost and depersonalized.

For his survival an individual needs to go through an awakening. The "awakening" is at two levels. At the material level, his problems, contradictions and frustrations must be seen in the "one-world" perspective. This level of awakening will produce favourable preconditions for right action. At the spiritual level, his awakening to the truth (satya) of the *unity* of all mankind and nature will bring to him the necessary spiritual energy for right action.

This gives rise to questions of practical relevance to the first, or material, level of awakening. Where and how do we start to control or limit desire, and consequently systematize the production and distribution of goods and services to satisfy it and maintain social cohesion? Instead of thinking only of so-called "progress", or more and more production, or enormous profit and consequently power, can we tune ourselves to think, feel and act first in terms of social benefit, survival of the individual and stability? Some of

the economic principles of the Sarvodaya philosophy, such as the withdrawal from large-scale industrialization, and the adoption of simple living, offer guidelines for achieving this.

If a few start thinking, feeling and acting on these lines, can such small groups of individuals with no urge for power or profit, and who are therefore, perhaps, less forceful, survive and be effective against the powerful international organizations of power-profit?

Can a few opt out of and challenge the present self-destructive system which is crushing the individual? Will it make such a difference to the main current?

It seems that such highly motivated small groups who, in a way, try to opt out do stimulate not only the interest but often the envy and admiration of the millions caught in the current. Many amongst the floating ones would like to imitate those who opt out, but are held back by a variety of considerations. They may have a conviction that their efforts are essential to the functioning of society—or they may fear a life without the material props to which they are accustomed. In effect, they fear change.

The small "vanguard" which opts out thus becomes isolated, or dies out, or, as in India, tries to subsist on subversions and stipends from the state, or from the rich. In most cases this corrupts them.

A variety of experiments are now being attempted in many parts of the world. Biologists, scientists, architects, engineers, philosophers and technicians are attempting to create new modes of habitation and social interaction.

It is amazing how many, especially among the younger generation, all over the world, are experimenting with possible solutions. From Asia and Africa, to Europe and America, serious and often inspired efforts are being made. They are extremely relevant to those who are thinking these matters out in a country like India. The way we are going now, with confused objectives and inadequate capacities, will surely lead us to problems unprecedented in our history. The opportunities before us are as unique as the dangers. But it seems that we are incapable of seeing either of them clearly, concerned as we are in totally irrelevant struggles of personality or power.

On a different level, the question is not how an individual can survive in a small or big community, but how will he relate this small community to the outside world of poverty, corruption, power-profit hunger, exploitation and war? In this age of satellite, computers, micro-chips, telecommunication and easy travel, how "isolated" can you be?

For example, a small community of 176, trying to live a simple life in communion with their environment near Kingston, Ontario, in Canada is threatened with "acid rain" from the USA and thus with pollution of their lakes, rivers and forests.

Half-a-dozen communities which sprang up in Brazil, Argentina, Peru, Uruguay and Colombia during the nineteen-seventies have been destroyed by the horrors of political unrest and military action.

* * *

It is said that in ancient India (and possibly elsewhere too) sages and saints kept the weapons of warfare in their custody and imparted their secret only to those who did special *tapas* or penance to prove that these would not be misused in anger, hate, or jealousy.

Today power is popularized. Anyone can acquire it if he has the inclination. Hitler, Stalin, Mussolini, Mao and others all over the world, India included, are examples of what happens when power goes into the hands of those whose ideals are all wrong. The question is, how can power, technological and scientific, be used strictly for social benefit? Can we discipline and rationalize our own (individual) motivations for profit, pleasure, and power? Can education speed the process? Without self-discipline, scientific and technological power will always be misused and will bring destruction.

How many in a community will intelligently accept this self-discipline? Perhaps some will pursue their unhindered path to pleasure, power and profit. The state, the bureaucracy, leaders and politicians are *never inclined towards self-discipline and intelligent* compassion. They do not learn, even the hard way, after repeated wars and devastation. It is the poor, suffering and sensitive "common" man, the individual, who has to learn if he wants to survive.

After much suffering, people wake up to the fact that in order to survive the individual must act intelligently and courageously and feel fully responsible for his actions and for the future of the community in which he lives. Vietnam is a classic example; the American individual, sick and ashamed of the misuse of the power of science, opted out of that stupid, cruel game, refused to participate in it, became vocal in his protest against it, and stopped the war which was killing millions, and destroying a whole culture

The modern state invades the life of the individual at all levels of his existence. The secret service, the army, the taxation departments, the insurance and finance organizations all have dossiers on the individual. The state, if it wants, can deprive the individual of any privacy. The computer revolution in the West, what with ever-increasing computerization of records of credit, of hospital treatment, of purchases from shops, hotels, airlines and so on, now enables the state to know exactly what an individual buys, and how often, where he spends his holidays and with whom. The controlled stimulation of consumers by the producers, i.e., advertising, enables the authorities concerned to modify the tastes, lifestyles and behaviour patterns of individuals.

In spite of all this the individual seems not only to survive, but function with relative freedom of thought and action. An "awakening" to the dangers of total control by authority is clearly visible. Even in a country like India, in spite of the ingrained feudal, tribal and caste conditioning, an awakening is taking place to the true relationship of the individual with authority. People are becoming more conscious of their rights, and awake to attempts to erode them.

Behind the iron curtain in Europe, there are whispers of an awakening, which is a hopeful sign. The year 1981-82 showed an unprecedented upsurge in Poland, and dissent to a lesser extent in Rumania. But in these countries and in the USSR, the machinery of government is so powerful that the individual often has to surrender in order to survive.

These reactions against corrupt, inefficient, highly centralized power structures show that, however oppressed and controlled an

individual may be, he has a deeper awareness that transcends fear. The spirit of the individual is indomitable.

But is power, scientific, technological or political, always destructive? The motivation to acquire and maintain power can be wrong, sinful and harmful. But controlled by compassion, power can be creative and fruitful. Throughout the ages there have been enlightened rulers. Europe, America, Japan, India and Singapore have shown in modern times, at least over some periods, the power of science and technology being put to good use. It is pragmatic and profitable to use science and technology for the good and benefit of society.

The machinery of state, the party and the profit oriented structure of industry and finance cannot be intelligent or compassionate, as their motivation is for profit or power. They cannot see the interdependence of the various areas and levels of existence. Their view is restricted and narrow.

But awakened individuals can make use of the apparatus of the state and the political machinery for the benefit of the individual as a whole.

In this world of speed, stress, frustrations, greed, violence, fear and uncertainty, how many individuals at how many levels of our day to day life can be expected to be intelligently compassionate and capable of controlling themselves, and can use science and technology for beneficial purposes alone? How many can resist the tremendous temptations of keeping power, profit and pleasure for only themselves, their tribe, caste or nation?

How many such outstanding individuals in a community will be able to transform a cruel, competitive, violent, insecure society *into a relaxed, compassionate, stable and happy one?*

One Mahatma Gandhi or Martin Luther King can make a tremendous difference. So can a Jayaprakash Narayan. Today there are many others on the scene of action. If social benefit and advancement (not only progress) is clearly proclaimed as the ideal for action, thousands will accept its self-discipline willingly and happily, as we have seen during India's freedom struggle and also elsewhere, as in China during the revolution against the Kuomintang. But history shows us that man the individual has slipped

back repeatedly into ignorance and lethargy—*tamoguna,* which means inertia, sloth, ignorance and shortsightedness—and has almost destroyed himself. Even in the so-called Golden Age of Indian history, maybe three thousand years ago, the great sage and saint Vyasa said, "I shout with my arms upraised but no one listens to me."

Has not history repeated itself during those few thousand years? But today the nuclear and environmental crisis is endangering the whole of life on this planet and there are too few who have the desire or capacity to shout Perhaps the very seriousness of the situation will make the awakening of a few more individuals a little easier. As it is, there are now quite a few who are raising up their arms and shouting Are we listening? How many of us?

What is the likely scenario on earth in the next hundred years? To control and organize society, a world government has been suggested. Serious thinkers and good, dedicated people strenuously work for it Will their efforts succeed only in creating yet another highly centralized paper-bound, expensive, bureaucracy that will not be able to control even the internal rivalries of its own constituents? We have the example of the UN, that has given only marginal benefits. It has provided an excellent forum, a market place where the mighty bargain for power and where those who do not have it only shout. Few major world problems have been solved at the UN during the past thirty-six years. A world government will only add to the existing lethargic organizations that, apart from marginally reducing unemployment, do little, but keep up the illusion that they are doing good.

Complete chaos and breakdown, if brought about by selfish seekers after power and profit in governmental, military, industrial, commercial and political organizations, can create the right conditions for either the "awakening" of intelligence, courage and compassion in a few inspired and dedicated individuals (and thus the potential for transformation in socio-economic-cultural relationships), or else a dictatorship. The awakening itself unfortunately often leads to the dictatorship, as in France after the Revolution, and in the Soviet Union in this century.

It is a fact of life today, and we have referred to it previously, that a rapid and inevitable exhaustion of the resources of this small planet of ours is taking place because of the profligate consumption of the world's natural wealth by the consumer societies. Resources are wasted either by over-consumption or by the diversion of economic effort to war production, as well as the destruction of the world's biosystems by war. A condition will surely arise when, if we do not share out the meagre resources, use them carefully and live intelligently and compassionately together in a world-wide community, we will not survive

In a survey of energy problems in 1981, the IISA (International Institute of Systems Analysis), an international organization of scientists, engineers, industrialists, economists and statisticians, came to the conclusion that even if there were no further escalations in arms spending only 20% of the population of the world would be able to maintain the average standard of living achieved in developed countries, with the present and potential energy resources. These include hydro, nuclear, hydrogen, solar, tidal and wind power at their present and potential state of development till the middle of the 21st century. It is presumed that the hydrocarbons will be so depleted by then (2050) that their use will be peripheral.

If energy utilization on the global level is rationally organized, this report says fifty per cent of the population of the world can reach the standard of living now attained in north Italy and metropolitan England.

If, however, a political solution to the problem of power-conflicts is found, and expenditure on arms is reduced by fifty per cent, seventy-five per cent of the global population will be able to have shelter, food, clothing, health, education, free vacations and transport, by 2050 A.D.

The Brandt Commission's work in starting a North-South dialogue to rationalize the utilization of world resources will certainly gather momentum as more and more individuals grasp the problem and understand why there is poverty, and how, as well as how soon a sane approach can remove it with an application of appropriate technology and humane organization.

Even barring calamities, the course of history for the next century (after which it is projected, there will be 10 billion people on this earth with not enough room for all to stand) will be one of constant tensions and turmoil. Perhaps more and more individuals will wake up to their responsibilities and opt out of this disastrous course. This opting out of the existing system by hundreds and thousands can perhaps reduce the remaining individuals' perception of the system as inevitable and permanent, and inspire them to break away from it too.

Under these enormous pressures only an intelligent, courageous, compassionate person can survive as an individual and inspire others to act. The rest will flow with the current, faceless millions (or billions) with no individuality but that which is stimulated by the media used by power, pleasure and profit organizations. These faceless millions in the agony of frustration, fear and boredom will look for help from those who stand apart from this mad torrent.

For some time the small group of outstanding individuals will be only an ideal, a norm, a hope. After a great deal of suffering, wars of liberation, revolutions, dictatorships and confusion, the power motive may become weaker. Rome was proud and powerful for over six hundred years, but Italy today has no standing as a world leader. England was borne for three hundred years on the crest of the imperial wave. Now after physical, mental, moral and intellectual exhaustion she seeks pursuits more in tune with this age of science and technology.

In this age of profit-power-pleasure all relationships are contractual; no one gives anything without expecting something in return. The motivation for social stability or peace will only exist if there is an assured reward of equality of advantage, profit and enjoyment. When such a balance is reached, after class and economic warfare and revolutions, all the groups in a social system will have a vested interest in *maintaining* stability as every one of them would suffer in consequence of any unrest.

Stabilization and self-discipline come to the mind of man only too slowly, after a great deal of horror and suffering.

Meanwhile, superficial adjustments to reduce tensions and con-

flict will be made by the UN or other diplomatic bodies. Conferences will be held. Temporary relief will surely be provided by these. The few who intelligently stand "alone" must and will help in the adjustments, which could be social, political, economic or psychological. These adjustments, though at first of a temporary nature, may lead to long term movements. Take the continuing detente with Russia, in spite of the crises in Afghanistan, Iran, Ethiopia and South East Asia in 1980. The superpowers with their allies in Europe and Asia are often at loggerheads. This is not only because their vested interests in markets for oil and raw materials differ. In Europe and America, as well as in many areas of Asia and Africa, there is a genuine fear of Russian power. This grew after the Afghanistan episode. The apparent American economic and political indecision at the time helped this fear to grow.

But France, Germany, Japan, and to a lesser extent Canada, though allies of the USA, felt that confrontation with the Soviet Union would mean a loss of trade and eventually more serious trouble for them. So these countries demonstrated a more rational and realistic approach to the problem by pursuing the policy of continuing detente with Russia.

Perhaps the exigence of production, profit, distribution and consumption of goods and services will henceforth dictate the course of history and the survival of the individual. If you want to deal in goods or services with a person, whatever his nationality, killing him is not the best way of doing it ! This is dawning on many who hold or have held power; the foremost amongst them are Helmut Schmidt of Germany and Dr. Willy Brandt.

But the time lag between realizing a fact and taking action on it creates inordinate and often cataclysmic pressures. These will be felt most intensely in the LDCs. Ultimately the gravity of tensions depends on the tolerance level in a community or a culture. If a community is incapable of adjusting to new challenges it just disintegrates and is lost.

An individual in such societies often gives up hope of ever being able to survive the new stimulations, demands and pressures. He is, as it were, dead before he can be awakened to a new and eclectic existence.

CHAPTER
VIII

THE INDIVIDUAL HIS WORK AND ORGANIZATIONS



An individual is what an individual *does*. The individual's *relationship with his work is of the utmost importance in giving* another dimension to his personality. The nature and extent of the actions of an individual determine the kind of society in which he lives and the quality of his life.

An individual is in action all the time. Seeing, hearing, tasting, touching, smelling, feeling and thinking, he is never at rest. Even in his sleep he is in action through his dreams. His breathing is an action without which he ceases to exist. To exist, an individual must act; to survive as an individual he must act intelligently and competently. How he acts will determine whether he is satisfied and happy, or restless and full of sorrow.

In many traditional societies the individual is deeply engaged in ritual or religious activities. Out of fear, or for benefit, he indulges in rites and practices that do not have a rational basis. These also affect his personality, and condition all aspects of his behaviour.

The Hindu, Buddhist and Jain systems of India have given an enormous amount of importance to the relationship between the individual and his work.

In the ancient Hindu tradition work was a constant *yadnya*, a holy sacrifice. Whatever the individual thought or felt was an offering, and he had no claim to the fruits of his action. He had certain duties to perform, and their performance, diligently, devotedly and regularly, year after year, and perhaps life after life, was the be-all and end-all of existence. He acquired merit, *punya*, by doing his duty, his *dharma*, and that was the main objective. The individual under this system had no expectations of profiting from the work he did. He had to be happy with whatever God gave him. As the Bhagavad Geeta states, your right is to correct, diligent, efficient action only, and not to its fruit. But an individual must not remain idle — work he must, all the while. How *wrong action performed with evil motivations destroys both society* and the individual has been illustrated in the Jataka stories and other mythologies, thousands of years old. They are part of the conscious and subconscious culture of the Hindu, Buddhist and Jain systems.

For thousands of years this formula did bring a certain amount of cohesion and harmony to Indian society. The teachings of the saints, mystics and poets, the pressure of social custom, and often inertia, kept the individual related to his work with minimum expectation. He seemed to be happy and never questioned the system under which he functioned; he belonged, he was protected; he was secure, though not always happy.

To the Hindu in Bali, Indonesia, all work is a form of worship. Farming, carving, dancing or weaving, is a ritual. With this approach, social cohesion and cooperation is easy and often spontaneous and satisfying. Selfish activities are subdued in the surrendering of the self to work and the joy that follows it. Even in modern times, perhaps because of this conditioning of his mind, a Balinese individual is distinctly different from other Indonesians.

In Tibet till the invasion of the Chinese, when a new set of motivations were brought to the Tibetan people, the objective of work and of existence itself was to wash away the ill effects of past

karma (action), to gain release from them and attain the state of nirvana Mahayana Buddhism as it developed in Tibet tried to create an ideal society based on the teachings of Gautama the Buddha.

In tribal societies in Africa, India and Indonesia, where Christianity and Islam had not too violently disturbed the older pattern, the prime motivation for an individual to work was to keep the society intact Whether in war or peace, in the field or at home, he did without question what was expected of him, and refrained from doing that which was taboo. From birth to death these taboos ruled him Magic and miracles were a part of this system.

Self-centred individuals, if not already frightened by the fear of the supernatural, were subdued, made obedient and forced to do the necessary work within the enclosed socio-cultural pattern.

In the Hindu system an individual's caste determined the work he was expected to do. There was no such thing as aptitude-based choice of career. His efficiency and output were not factors that affected the nature of his work. In his particular caste he was protected and sheltered, because he was a Brahmin, a Kshatriya, or a Vaishya. The Shudras did not count for much.

This division of work was accepted and however inefficiently it may have functioned, it stood the test of time. The break-up of this system came when an increasing number of Brahmins, Shudras, Vaishyas or Kshatriyas did not want to be related to the work that was allotted to them. With a Brahmin becoming a money-lender, a Shudra a school teacher and a Kshatriya a clerk in a bank, the system degenerated into conflict and tensions based on prejudice and pride. Dedication to work and a cohesive society gave way to a scramble for profit or power and a society broken up by hate.

Tibet attempted to keep a traditional society functioning smoothly through transcendental motivations. The Dalai Lama, when once asked to justify the keeping of one third of the Tibetan population in monasteries engaged in unproductive activities, replied that if nirvana was the objective of life, as many individuals as possible should be able to seek it in peace and security.

This does not mean that in Tibet this transcendental motivation of reaching nirvana succeeded in creating a society of non-violence and non-exploitation. The pursuit of power and profit plagued this society in spite of the fact that a reasonably practical opportunity was given by that system for a maximum number of individuals to reach a higher state of consciousness and therefore, a better perspective for right action. In fact a large number of people could reach a state of enlightened awareness, and yet this could not greatly affect the day-to-day life of the individual in the society at large.

It appears that the transcendental perspective may help on a very long-term basis to stabilize a society. But for the day-to-day, practical adjustments required in the short run, the work ethos must motivate the individual to harmonize his activities with those of others and with his environment.

In the Buddhist, Jain and Hindu mythologies there are illustrations galore of how wrong or evil motivation can vitiate action and create misery.

In the Mahabharata, Dronacharya, the archer and teacher of the greatest eminence, was inflamed by hate and a desire for revenge when he taught the Kauravas and Pandavas the arts of warfare, and this led to destruction and misery.

When Arjuna, the great hero and the best disciple of Drona, agonized over the fact that he would be compelled to kill his kindred, Lord Krishna explained to him in the greatest detail and most beautifully, in the Bhagavad Geeta, Arjuna's relationship with the task he had to perform. Lord Krishna described this task as a duty, as niyata or dharma. Arjuna could not escape doing his dharma or duty; he must do it efficiently and completely, and yet without attachment to the result, good or bad. He must act only as an instrument of the Divine Will.

Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad Geeta explained action (karma) and lifted the acts of war and killing to a level at which the individual could function with clear, holistic and therefore compassionate vision. By doing this he enabled Arjuna to perform his duty without internal conflict, though devastating destruction might be the result.

Lord Krishna certainly succeeded in removing Arjuna's hesitation to fight and this helped Arjuna to win the war. The destruction that followed the war and the total collapse of society was perhaps 'ordained' and inevitable. The shining example of Arjuna's dedi cation to his karma remained an ideal unattainable by others for thousands of years.

Lord Krishna himself stated in the Bhagavad Geeta that hardly ever did an individual attempt to reach this state of nirvanic consciousness, and amongst those who had attempted it, few had reached it

The ideal of *anasakti* (non-attachment to the fruits of action) has indeed inspired many an individual and this has brought forth outstanding intellectual and cultural attainments in many societies. Apart from saints and mystics, poets, painters, craftsmen and scientists have reached a state of creativeness that inspired others. Giotto, Michelangelo and Van Gogh were able to express this creative urge so beautifully mainly because they were acting under a compulsion greater than the common one of earning their livings. In the political field Mahatma Gandhi and Abraham Lincoln are the outstanding examples of such a compulsion In science, Einstein, Schrodinger, Planck, Fermi and Oppenheimer are some of the most outstanding ones.

All religious traditions relate work to duty. Christianity and Islam have specially emphasized this aspect of all action. It is the will of Allah that dominates human action. 'God's will be done' — Man is an instrument through which the Divine will is actualized. The Buddhist approach to right action is somewhat different. The prime motivation for action is enlightenment.

But this cosmic perspective is too difficult for a common man to grasp It is for this reason that in all traditions, rituals, prayers, churches, mosques, temples and gurdwaras become important.

Leaving aside (for the time being) the transcendental or spiritual approach to work as a sacred sacrifice, can an ordinary individual be made to realize that his work is connected with and dependent on the work of the millions of others beyond his caste, tribe, religion or nation? Unless he gears himself to work intelligently and harmoniously with others, conflicts, tensions and wars are in-

evitable, and he himself will be the loser in the immediate future. He must understand this and educate and discipline himself to act competently. This is intelligence and correct vision.

It may be easy to make an individual, whatever his profession, see the truth in this. But the individual is helpless, being only a cog in a huge, selfish, cruel machine. Ammunition factory workers may realise that their work is going to lead to the useless death of thousands and to the misery of millions. But their livelihoods depend on their jobs, and, either by killing their conscience, or deluding themselves with images of patriotism or religion, they continue to actively help in their own ultimate destruction.

However, even the gradual realization by hundreds, and then thousands, that the work they do is anti-human, anti-natural and perhaps disastrous, does help, and it has often changed the course of history. After the World Wars, reports, seminars, books, radio and television programmes have brought a better perspective to the people of many nations. They are now able to view their actions more rationally.

The CND (the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament), and the movement launched by Martin Luther King for social equality, are encouraging examples of the effects of this knowledge. Such movements have inspired millions and as a result their day-to-day tasks are performed with greater dedication and integrity.

At the highest level are the inspired individuals who regard their work as a sacred sacrifice made with the aim of bringing peace and harmony to the world. These are few in number, born once in a epoch — the saints, the mystics, the path-finders. Their work is not only inspiring but also exerts an influence on later events. The Buddha, Christ, Muhammad, Shankaracharya, Vyasa, and more recently Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Vivekananda, Ramana Maharshi and J. Krishnamurti, are but a few examples. Persons like Dhondo Keshav Karve, Dr. Albert Schweitzer, Gopal Ganesh Agarkar, Louis Braille, Helen Keller and Father Damien inspired and influenced the flow of events.

On a spiritually lower plane, but also a profoundly subtle and holistic one, the scientists, mathematicians, biologists and physicists present the relationship of the individual to his work in a no less

comprehensive and compelling way. Einstein, Schrodinger, Oppenheimer, Bohr and Eddington speak a "language" that is no different from that of Advaita Vedanta, of the unity of existence.

But the mystics and saints, as well as the scientists and mathematicians, speak in terms not easily and quickly understandable by the common man. Their experience and vision has to be simplified and popularized by others. Even so, Einstein's theories regarding mass and energy have definitely affected the consciousness of man. An individual may not understand Einstein's statement that objects and events are but distortions on the surface of the spacetime continuum and are not real in the commonly understood sense of the word. But this experience of Einstein's profoundly alters the individual's consciousness at a deeper level. What is of significance is that both mystics and scientists create concepts, or awareness, that are beyond the conceptual experience of the common man but nevertheless do influence the attitude of the individual to his surroundings by altering his perception of the universe. It is as though, at some unconscious level, the common man absorbs the new ideas and experiences. Copernicus and Galileo in an earlier epoch had the same effect on the world of their time.

On a still lower and more limited plane, the modern industrialist, the financier, the media expert, the transporter, the technician and the manager work as pragmatic profit seekers for an equilibrium that is beneficial to people and communities over a larger area.

The structure of a society, its cohesion, its dynamism, even its culture has always been determined by the attitude of the individual to his work. Many a civilization has collapsed, many people have been enslaved, much poverty and misery has resulted in consequence of the ignorance and incompetence of man in his work.

It is out of ignorance that a man sees his work only as a means of livelihood. Jobs undertaken without an intelligent understanding of their effect on the environment and the ecological balance have created deserts, diverted the course of rivers, brought about landslides and polluted lakes, rivers and seas. The lives of millions are affected. Some feel that the Earth is doomed already.

An individual involved in work with narrow selfish motives of profit, pride or power will always create conflicts and confusion. When selfishness is kept under control through intelligent understanding, an individual can through his work create harmony and peace. Often religious, family, tribal and caste discipline can control selfishness. So can involvement in "sacrifice" for a nation, a leader or a king.

In modern times these forms of discipline are not strong enough to control the conflicts bred by selfish actions. New forms of discipline are being attempted with some success through the UN and other world bodies. But in the context of the great game of power-politics these attempts to discipline individual and group selfishness and stupidity seem very inadequate.

A society prospers and reaches a certain state of harmony or equilibrium if the actions of the individuals comprising it are efficient, competent and compassionate.

Societies, big and small, all over the world have often, through diligent, inspired effort, arrived at the correct balance between competence and compassion. Ancient Egypt, India, Greece and Crete maintained such an equilibrium for centuries. Modern Sweden, Norway, Switzerland and Denmark are other examples.

For action to contribute positively to the progress and stability of a society, the correct perspective is essential. Without this, action can lead to confusion and chaos in society, and for the individual who undertakes them, frustration, despair, cynicism and sorrow.

A correct perspective will cause the individual to see the interrelatedness and interdependence of human existence. He will understand that man cannot live by destroying nature around him. Intelligence takes into account the necessity of establishing a balance between the needs and actions of various groups, nations and systems, so that the world functions as a unified whole and is not torn and destroyed by conflicts. Actions and work carried out with the correct perspective and intelligence will lead to security, prosperity and happiness.

Today, all over the world, our actions are leading to conflict, shortages, poverty, famine, violence and despair. Few have in view the possible consequences of their actions. Shortsighted and ignorant

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take advantage of worldwide opportunities for production-consumption-distribution of goods and services, over 150 registered consultancies are operating in India alone. Several Arab, Latin American, and now African countries are joining together to form consultancies that can make use of resources and knowhow on a worldwide basis to create goods and services.

This is a revolutionary change. It transcends national, racial, parochial, tribal, caste and religious restrictions. This "freedom" brings its own exhilaration and challenges, and the individual works with a new inspiration. Without acknowledging it, an individual is working as a "world citizen" and creates through his work a new set of relationships between man and man, and man and his environment.

We need to see that the resources of the world are not wasted in satisfying the egoistical power-urges of nations, i.e., in the manufacture of armaments. One Trident submarine costs 1 billion dollars, or Rs. 8,00,000,000 is enough to feed, clothe and shelter 80,000 Indians and their families in perpetuity!

It is obvious that three-fourths of the population of the world cannot continue to live in hopeless poverty whilst one-fourth live in splendid luxury. The poverty of the majority is partly due to the control of resources by the minority, but is largely the result of the incompetence of the majority in utilizing their own resources.

This utilization requires the acquiring of the necessary technology. This in turn means either the "transfer of technology" from the Northern to Southern countries, or its indigenous development which will take generations. In the meantime conflicts and stress will increase.

Egoistical pride-power-profit motives make this intelligent approach impossible for the Northern countries today. It is largely the lack of intelligence that brings this about. Dr. Willy Brandt and his colleagues have made an excellent report which makes it easy for anyone to see that North-South equilibrium in the processing and utilization of resources will be profitable and create conditions of stable prosperity for all countries (North and South) in the foreseeable future. But the ignorance, greed, pride or opinionatedness in the Northern countries have made commissions

like Dr. Brandt's, or other analyses by expert bodies, or even the pragmatic opinions of some of the so-called vested interests, ineffective.

Human motivations are always confused; good and bad, human and diabolical vie with each other at every point and level of human endeavour.

In World War II the Russians (and their allies) and the Germans (and their allies) between them killed over 25,000,000 individuals. The divided, frustrated Germany of 1946 onwards could never have thought that one day it might have political or economic contact with the USSR.

Both nations contributed to the division of Europe; they built the "Great Wall" between themselves for "protection"; they enthusiastically helped create NATO and Warsaw Pact nations; they formed the EEC and the Comecon to increase their economic power.

Fear, anger and hate should have perpetuated this division of humankind; however, it appears that economic compulsions of mutuality of profit through interlinked, interdependent production and distribution systems, with "East" and "West" Europe as a single unit, are transcending the old illogical feelings of hate, anger or fear. Human considerations of peace and stability, together with better employment opportunities, also contribute to this national way of thinking.

The latest example of this is the Trans-Siberia Gas pipeline that will supply this source of energy to run factories and provide employment for more people in Western Europe. France, West Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Belgium and Holland are all involved in this $ 20 billion contract. Deliveries of the high-technology equipment necessary for this project have already started, in spite of the "ban" illogically imposed on this by the USA as part of the Great Power game.



Ultimately, the group, nation, culture or civilization will only survive if the individual does. And its survival will depend on the intelligence and competence of the individual.

In the context of the challenges, contradictions and pressures of today, how many intelligent individuals in a society would be needed to make a difference?

Perhaps if even one in a family of five, or even ten in a community of five hundred, or two hundred in a town of 20,000 attain such intelligence, the others will follow them. It is not, however, necessary that there should be leaders and followers. If the individual understands the interdependence of global life, then, whether father, mother, son, daughter, scientist, industrialist, policeman, trader, administrator or diplomat, he or she will inspire others to correct action, and the society will prosper.

In the majority of communities today all around the world, the ethos of work is being rapidly lost and replaced by the hunt for happiness. The quality of work, of efficiency in planning and education seems to be lacking everywhere. The more the machine is made to work, the more negative the relationship becomes between the individual and the work in hand.

One of the questions the writer is in the habit of asking people whom he meets on his travels in different countries is, "Are you satisfied with the work you are doing? Are you really interested in your work?"

In 90% of the cases the answer is (whether he or she is a scientist, educator, administrator or industrialist), "I am interested in the money I get out of the job, and not in the work itself." Only about five percent have a glow on their face when they talk of their work.

The bigger an organization, the less concerned, interested and involved are its workers in their work. The hierarchical, bureaucratic restrictions often kill an individual's enthusiasm for his work, and he gets lost in the jealousies, rivalries, and power struggles in the organization. In this competition he can hardly survive, let alone maintain any interest in his work.

The countries that have developed a dynamic and practical ethos of work, such as Japan, Germany, the USA, Sweden and Switzerland, have prospered. The social structure is stable. The individual is secure and reasonably satisfied.

The first principle demonstrated in the work ethos of those societies, is that the *worker can expect rewards in proportion to*

his output. In the so-called communist countries, the reward is of the time twenty to thirty percent less (not more) than the put. In the so-called capitalist, consumer societies, it is about percent less.

The second principle of this work ethos is *total, integr efficiency.* As we have read before, *"Yogah karmasu kaushal* i.e. "Yoga is efficiency in work". Only when the individual is lated to his work through "integrated" efficiency (that is effici at all points of his work) can he produce the maximum out and feel the joy of it. This efficiency depends on the excellenc his tools, the time spent on the work, the effect of his work on environment, the quality and consistency of his output and relevance of his work to the safety, security and harmony of society in which it is undertaken.

In Japan, Germany, Sweden, Switzerland and to a large ex in the USA and Canada, these two principles determine the lationship between the individual and his work.

The third principle is *pride of craftsmanship and joy in work.* Without these, the relationship of the individual to his w is negative.

Joy in work and pride in craftsmanship are becoming incr ingly unattainable for an ordinary worker whose work consists of pressing the buttons of automatic machines. The sophisticat of technology brings in its wake a human-work relationship t is mindless (soulless) and automatic.

Automation and robotization are the logical sequence. S individuals will not be required to tend machines except to re them. Robots will do all the work, as they are doing increasin in Japan.

This change in the man-work relationship brings about a radi transformation in the socio-cultural life of the individual. T transformation is occurring in Northern America and to a les extent in Europe.

The individual-work relationship based on the three princip of the work ethos has automatically created the disciplines that systematize these societies and make them run smoothly and h moniously. Governmental controls in the form of bureaucraci

rules, regulations, licences, compulsion, and fear, are not necessary to run them. Leaders as we know them in the LDCs are not indispensable, as work is undertaken through a sense of responsible dedication and accomplished with intelligent efficiency. This is true democracy.

Democracy is a word much bandied about today. Even the craziest totalitarians and dictators call their systems basic or centralized democracies. It is not difficult to see through the hypocrisy. Only the unintelligent are deceived and accept the formulas, as they have no other alternative.

To many people democracy means (a) the right to equal consumption of goods and services and (b) equality of power, prestige and benefits. But, in fact, what democracy really means is (a) the right to elect the government of your choice which will run the country the way you want, (b) equality under the law and (c) equality of opportunity.

It is not the equality of consumption but the equal capacity to produce goods and services that can make democracy function. In Japan, West Germany, Sweden and the USA, after much travail and trial and error over a long period of time, this equality of capacity to produce goods and services and to shoulder responsibilities has been understood and practised. Democracy effectively functions in these countries, where the trade unions, the finance and transport organizations as well as municipal authorities intelligently and competently shoulder their respective burdens in the systematization of society.

In a country like India, with a strong hangover of feudal and traditional mental conditioning, with unequal capacities and a lack of dynamic motivation, democracy will have the tendency to degenerate into bureaucracy and result in strife and suffering all the while. Either dictatorship in one form or another that perhaps seven people in ten do not mind, or a kind of Indian Mafia of contact men and fixers, will operate in this country for some time to come. But here in India too the inefficiency of such a system and its failure to deliver the goods in terms of systematization of society will make violent change inevitable.

Japan, perhaps, is a unique example of the blending of traditional and modern disciplines of work, in spite of the traumatic heritage of World War II, to create a dynamic and relatively stable society. The traditional feudal disciplines of respect for elders and seniors, sense of belonging to a family, accepting responsibility willingly, total concern and dedicated effort to achieve excellence in work, together with an infinite capacity to appreciate beauty and harmony, has helped to create in Japan an individual who can "survive" under the tremendous pressures of modern society.

Obviously, pressures may grow even there in the future, and distortions may occur owing to involvement in the power game, leading to wasteful production of armaments, and ultimately involvement again in war. Then the individual in Japan would be destroyed. But this may not happen. Long years of suffering and sorrow have enabled a kind of practical wisdom to arise in that country. Why not pray that this intelligence will guide others too and help to inspire individuals elsewhere?

The tragedy of the LDCs is very serious. Most of them today, at least, seem to have missed the way. Either they are involved directly or indirectly in the big power game, as in Indo-China, Thailand, the Philippines, Iran, the Arab world, Indonesia and now Africa, or they have created a web of illusory slogans such as Socialism, Communism, or "Democracy", forgetting the basic principles of the work ethos.

If one looks around carefully one can see that in almost all parts of the world, barring a few exceptional countries, many individuals in society today do very little productive work.

India is a case worth serious attention. Few people on the face of this earth have as consistent a tradition of philosophical wisdom as in this country. For thousands of years the teachings of mystics and saints have effectively conditioned and controlled the selfish, cruel, crude behaviour of the individual. For an Indian, the criterion of civilization was tolerance, compassion and intelligence.

And yet the attitude of the individual in India towards his work today is deplorable. Take a walk around a town, city or village in India and notice idle gossipers in restaurants, cinemas and on sidewalks, and even during working hours in offices and factories.

pectations of performance. Free from the old caste or tribal system, he owes no "duties" to anyone and demands only his rights.

Add to this the proclamations of the politicians regarding progress, development and the removal of poverty, that an individual has only fundamental rights (but not duties) and that the state has the "directives" to create for the individual conditions under which he will be prosperous, secure, happy and powerful. The individual then need do nothing to bring this about. The state, the bureaucrat, the party will do all. This sort of thinking has totally destroyed the work ethos of the individual in modern India.

The rot became a riot when we buried the Mahatma and his insistence that rights can only follow duties. The dignity and sanctity of work as a sacrifice for the upkeep, prosperity and harmony of society, and as a purification of the individual seeking completeness and fulfilment in this life and hereafter, yielded easily and quickly to the scramble for power, pleasure, and profit, unhindered by any disciplines or standards of efficiency. The State promises to do everything, so why work?

The worst and most noticeable inefficiency and callousness is in governmental and public sector organizations, where total security of tenure and promotion, and lack of example and urgency from the top, rob the worker of incentives to be efficient.

But ultimately the responsibility is still the individual's If he desires certain goods and services, he works efficiently and hard to get them and then seeks his right to enjoy them, his relationship with his work is positive. Such a relationship will create wealth commensurate with the efficiency of the worker, and if the wealth thus created is consumed sensibly, society will be prosperous and peaceful.

If, however, as in India, consumption is "guaranteed" by the politicians or the State whether or not national wealth is created, the individual need not work at all. His increases of salary, sponsored by unions and politicians, or guaranteed by service regulations, bear no relation to his output.

The tragedies of Welfare States all over the world illustrate this. Great Britain has gone almost bankrupt in trying to run a Welfare State. In Denmark the system had to be modified. In the USA,

individuals and with the environment, but also the nature of society itself.

Walk into any establishment involved in production, service or education in a developing country like India. Find out the percentage of the workers there who are (a) interested in the work they are doing, (b) competent enough to do it, (c) getting some sense of fulfilment out of it, and (d) feeling that by doing it they are doing something worthwhile for society.

If, in any of these establishments, at least 10% of the individuals are positively, competently and intelligently related to their work, we can be sure that the society will not disintegrate. But unhappily, for many reasons, the performance of one's job is becoming a farce in India.

Even with the best will in the world, with the high motivation of excellence, and of building a better world, of doing something of national or even international importance, the individual soon loses his high standards by becoming involved in bureaucratic red-tape and power and prestige games. The difficulties he faces in doing his job will make him cynical. In banks, insurance corporations, transport, industry, mining and power plants there is inefficiency due to totally negative attitudes towards work. This existing system cannot respond to the challenges of the production-oriented world, and will have to be discarded. Today the individual in India is unable to relate to the work he wishes to do, and thus relapses into the misery of callous cynicism with no other aim in life but to push himself up, by fair means or foul.

The need in modern times is for abundant, efficient, quick production of goods and services. The quality of life in modern society will depend on the excellence of goods and services produced and their consumption through equitable distribution. The LDCs are living on borrowed time and are still far from achieving or even aiming for this excellence.

In the world today, those who are competent and determined will prosper through the proper utilization of resources. Those who are incompetent, however numerous they may be, will not be able to banish poverty unless their basic attitude towards work changes radically.

Excellence in work and pride of craftsmanship still continue to be part of the cultures of Japan, Germany, Switzerland and Sweden. In these societies new technology and scientific achievements still bring a sense of adventure, achievement and fulfilment to individuals.

The personal gain or profit motive is adequate, rational and legitimate in these societies. It encourages hard work and gratification provided it does not lead to anti-social activities.

With new scientific discoveries, new systems of communication, new materials, new production and management methods and new techniques of education, the advanced countries are rushing far ahead of the LDCs in their capacity to control and utilize resources. Systems of research, production, finance, transport, purchase and sales are becoming so advanced, specialized, complex and worldwide that the uninitiated and incompetent will be lost in them. An incompetent individual will have no chance of survival in these societies unless he has state support.

The world is now being divided, not into the economic 'haves' and 'have nots', but into those who have knowledge and capacity, and those who have neither. As the systems of production become more sophisticated, fewer people will be able to control or manage them. At the moment it seems that even the most competent and powerful sometimes mismanage the systems. This happens even in advanced countries. Only Japan, Germany, Switzerland and Sweden, seem as yet to stand apart, though one wonders for how long.

A country like India is hopelessly lost in this monumental process of change. Because of the absence of a proper working spirit, not even 60% of our available and already established capacity to produce and transport energy, food and other goods and services is being utilized. This situation is taken advantage of by those who aim to bring about the total destruction of this society, which some of the extreme leftists proclaim to be necessary in order to start with a clean slate. Violence erupts in this situation; corruption and insecurity creep in. How can an individual survive under such circumstances?

It would be interesting to see how the Indian mind responds to the challenge posed by the advance of science and technology. Obviously we cannot run away from it now that it has already stimulated the hopes and desires of millions. Changes in techniques of production take place so rapidly that it is difficult for LDCs such as India to keep up with them. New sources of energy, new machines and new systems of transport, new materials will soon make it possible for one individual to produce enough goods and services, including food, houses, cloth, etc., for 10,000 persons. Theoretically then, only one individual need be intelligently and competently related to his work. The rest can sit back and relax.

In ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, Babylon and Chaldea, work was done by a few slave-drivers and hundreds of starving, sick, rebellious slaves. Today instead of slaves we have machines, and one efficient and intelligent scientist can do the same work with one (or two, or a hundred) machines which will not "starve" if properly maintained, and which never rebel. Robotization is with us.

Already, as the machines take over the work in the developed world, tourism has become a major industry. In the USA, for instance, 2.5%, 3.5% and 15.5% of the total population are involved in the production of food, clothing and shelter respectively. As against these 21.5%, 33% are employed in hobbies and entertainment. According to analysts this latter percentage of persons employed in leisure industries will increase to 50% by 2000 A.D.

All this radically affects the man machine-work relationships, and the work ethos itself. Old motivations such as caste, ritual or the maintenance of tradition, national pride or power are no longer as strong as they used to be.

What kind of a world will it be in which the work which one person is capable of doing can produce the goods and services required by 10,000? A society of leisure alone? Will sports, vacations, travel, music, literature and innumerable hobbies satisfy the individual? Will these 10,000 individuals do the work by turn or will one individual alone work?

What kind of individuals will they be if only one of them works and the rest relax? Will the "one" control the 10,000 and manage them? What then of democracy?

This is no longer science fiction. It is already becoming a reality.

Microprocessors, genetic engineering, the laser, the computer, satellites and superconductors are all with us already. Increasingly, in advanced countries, managements are thinking of reducing the hours of work per week. In Italy, as early as 1974, the FIAT industrial complex, highly automated, only needed to work for three days a week to produce all the automobiles that they could sell.

Today in Canada and the USA, workers are demanding a 38-hour week. It may even be reduced to 25 hours a week by 1990, after only partial robotization.

The fact that fewer and fewer individuals are being employed in production will present the problem of who has the income and money to buy the products. Commodities related to food, clothing and shelter may have to be subsidized or given away free.

An individual then need not work in order to survive!

The new generation of machines will require highly skilled organization and management. Few will be capable of understanding and using them. These chosen few will operate the machines and control the lives of millions.

The relationship with their work of these chosen few, who can think of, design, build and then use these new machines for production, will be totally different from the relationship between the individual and his work in the old system.

Even today, when man works with a machine, it dominates him and dictates a large part of his behaviour. A costly, delicate machine has to be kept in constant operation to pay back the cost and earn a profit quickly. So the individual works, if necessary, in three shifts, round the clock, and adjusts his habits to the requirements of the machine. This is so today even in the LDCs.

The new generation of computers and micro-processors are making redundant many tasks that were previously performed by the human brain. In fact, the brain of man now depends on these highly sophisticated machines, to solve problems involving complicated, inter-related data, which no human can solve.

For the few, these new machines, with their powerful new sources of energy and new techniques of operation, will bring the

excitement of new discovery, new power, new achievement. When they try to understand the quasar, among the mightiest sources of energy known to date in the universe, and also feel the enormous power of the subtlest source of energy, the quark, the individuals, the chosen ones who can work these machines and deal with the mathematics and physics of it all, will be way ahead of the common individual in experience and vision.

These few, the elite, maybe a few thousand of them, mostly from the developed nations, will produce goods and services and the necessities of life in abundance, while continuous holidays, travel, sports and cultural activities will keep the masses occupied and their minds passive and obedient. The few and their machines will thus run the world.

The techniques of communication and education, if highly centralized and controlled, can ensure that the masses are given their "bread and circuses", together with the illusion of freedom and democracy. Equal distribution of goods can keep the majority reasonably contended. Political institutions such as today's parliaments may still exist, but their legislative and administrative powers will be illusory. However, they can serve as outlets for the energies of those who still crave power. The activities of these persons may be innocuous, but they could be given important titles such as Prime Minister, Revolutionary Leader or Chairman-President for life.

Fifty years hence it will be machines which determine events. Whether the present "leadership" will by then have exhausted itself or whether it will try to hinder this progress, is not very important. The new machines and their producer-designers and operators, will go ahead regardless. No man, leader, party, nation, organization or ideology can stop the march of events.

* * *

Mahatma Gandhi was a great protagonist of the work ethos. Speaking to the Raja of Aundh in November 1936, he propounded his view that to "survive" the individual must work "constructively". "Constructive" work, as he used the term, is selfless work

or society. Without constructive work, he said, man would disintegrate and create conflict and chaos and society would cease to exist.*

In a situation where a few thousands can produce all the goods and services, and can efficiently manage the running of the world, would the rest disintegrate? Can an individual, if sufficiently provided with the necessities of life and a large amount of luxuries, exist and enjoy these without having had a hand in their production? Will he not feel guilty or lost, because he is not "earning" his livelihood?

Even if the above scenario is altered so that not a few thousands but a few millions are required to run the new machines, the problem before the rest will still exist.

This revolution is, therefore, not going to be technological and scientific alone, but also social and cultural. The question is, when machines produce all the wealth required, what does man do to justify his existence, and keep himself occupied and happy?

Insecurity, anxiety and competition have today made man restless. In many societies the individual has also taken to crime, drink, excessive smoking, etc., all signs of neurosis. Will total security and the abundant provision of goods and services remove competition, anxiety, and stress? Will the individual then be relaxed enough to relate more intelligently to other individuals and to his environment? Will he become cultured, civilized, noble, wise and happy?

Will a new culture be born with a totally new range and quality of relationships? With machines managed by a few, can man, the individual, experiment with a different kind of community life and follow intellectual pursuits that can widen his horizon of experience in cooperation with nature and his fellow human beings?

How will this system function? A new generation of machines and techniques *automatically creates the compulsions to produce* the goods and services desired and needed by man. The fact that

* The Raja had come to the Mahatma seeking his advice regarding his desire to give up his power and authority to the people of Aundh. The Mahatma wrote the "constitution" enshrining this gift of the Raja to his people, but warned him that only proper work would maintain the society of Aundh state.

these new machines of high sophistication and enormous productivity will operate on the basis of world-wide markets, raw materials, transport, finance, etc., would mean that the "elite" will need to have a global view. Without intelligence in the management of these new machines, devastation will result. Attempts will be made to make use of them for armament manufacturing and for war.

After Nagasaki and Hiroshima, in spite of the growth of power rivalries and advance in technology, neither atom bombs nor hydrogen bombs have yet been used. Their destructive capacity makes these nuclear weapons unusable. One hundred of the USA's hydrogen bombs would be enough to kill 120,000,000 Russians. The USSR has the capacity to retaliate in a "second-strike" operation by sending 200 of their bombs which will simultaneously kill 150,000,000 Americans, 75,000,000 Europeans and 2000,000,000 Chinese ! The Americans have 4500 such bombs and the Russians, reportedly, 3750 !

But the main problem of an individual under these conditions of rapid change and stress still remains unsolved; the problem of his relationship to his work, his capacity to participate effectively in creating a cultured, stable society. Efficient production of goods and services by the elite few will not solve the problem.

As socio-economic-cultural relationships become more world-wide, complex and complicated, the individual has to solve this problem for himself. On how he solves it will depend his very survival and the stability of the society.

He will have to adopt a totally different approach to his work in the context of the new and powerful machines. The organization and the management efficiency they would demand from him would affect his social and cultural life — his housing, food, dress, travel, leisure pursuits, entertainment, family structure, response to traditional religious and emotional requirements. The new machines are going to be great tyrants, standardizing and regimenting all forms of productive work in the interests of efficiency.

Will being ruled and provided for by machines and the few who know how to operate them be a new form of feudalism ? Will the efficient, intelligent work of the new elite and their machines

satisfy the non-materialistic urges of the individual? Can he survive without participating in this regimentation?

It is unfortunate that only a few in any community attain a high standard of excellence in work or in living, even if provided with equality of educational and employment opportunity. Equal opportunity does not necessarily remove inequality. Each system, no matter how revolutionary, forms its own hierarchies. The Communist systems have demonstrated this.

Machines do help in reducing these inequalities to a certain extent at the lower levels of practical intelligence. An individual of average intelligence and capacity can produce almost the same amount as a very intelligent and capable individual, by pressing the right buttons on a machine. But the machine will not make either of them the equal of an individual with a creative intelligence who will not stop at pushing buttons, but will go on to designing and constructing new machines.

The problem in the future will be twofold: (1) of the elite who will be in a position to plan and control the system, their work ethos and their sense of responsibility to other humans and their environment, and (2) of the remaining majority of individuals who will no longer have a work ethos to sustain them. The equilibrium and progress of the new society will depend on the former.

As yet today, only a very few, a mere handful amongst the scientists, thinkers, industrialists, financiers, sociologists, organizers, and managers, have reached anywhere near this state of intelligence and competence. In the next fifty years socio-economic compulsions and the new machines may bring many more to the forefront.

What will happen to LDCs such as India in this process? The Indian mind is conditioned to accept authority. A new authority that is intelligent and competent will not find it difficult to control India. If the "bread and circuses" are efficiently provided, and there is free scope to play-act some harmless political games, there should not be any complaints.

It is to be noted here that after World War II quite a few elite groups are now already operating for utterly selfish reasons on a world-wide basis. Bankers, industrialists, politicians, kings, princes, philosophers, landholders, scientists, writers and economists [illegible]

developed countries get together on cruises in the Mediterranean or at seminars in Hawaii, Greece, Cyprus, Italy, Florida and elsewhere, to discuss the utilization of world resources and technology for their own power and profit. Their activities, at times published but very often kept secret, are supposed to transcend national or religious factions. Often they have been effective in creating the right conditions for intelligent and competent production-distribution-consumption of goods and services in various fields (including armaments!).

During the last decade these elite groups and their "think-tanks" have often allowed Arabs and Africans to join them, sometimes under economic pressures such as vast investment of petro-dollars or OPEC oil price hikes. Even Malaysia, Singapore and Hong Kong, apart from Australia, are now contributing intelligent and competent individuals to these elite groups as consultancy partners, research workers or think-tank operators.

India, of all the LDCs, with its huge population, and no dearth of brain or talents, could be the most numerously represented in this elite. The capacity, intellectual, emotional, scientific, technological or managerial, of a large number of Indian individuals is truly second to none. So a number of Indians are capable of being accepted as valuable members of this elite group right from the start, when things seriously start to take shape.

India has lagged behind the other LDCs in this field, chiefly because there is no awakening yet in this country to the realities of the world situation. Irresponsible and unintelligent politics have created conditions where those who become a part of this elite either remain unrecognized in India or leave the country to find a field to operate in and obtain at least job-satisfaction for themselves.

There have been, however, stirring at some levels in India at the beginning of the eighties which indicate a vague urge for an awakening. As yet these are very faint and stifled by bureaucracy. A scientist or an entrepreneur in India has to spend more time in pursuing applications for sanctions of licenses, than in his laboratory or his workshop.

This is pathetic, especially because, in relation to the people and

communities of the Indian Ocean area, India could be the centre of creative thinking and action today.

The question can be asked whether an Indian individual, with his so-called "spiritual" tradition, his supposed tolerance of other points of view and other systems of behaviour, his flexibility and his almost infinite capacity to suffer in patience degradation and poverty, has any special part to play in the process of building up the new world order.

Looking around us in today's world at the greed, violence, ignorance, corruption and (often literally) cut-throat competition for wealth and power, an Indian seems no different from anyone else in another part of the world. Long starved of power, pleasure and profit by foreign domination or by the do's and don'ts of a caste- and tradition-bound society, he is now scrambling to obtain them.

Many people from all over the world, however, feel that an Indian individual should be able to shake off lethargy and humbug more easily, and take up the challenge of building a new world of peace and harmony with others. Can we vindicate their opinion?

With her high level of technology of production and distribution of goods and services India can help in the intelligent and competent utilization of the resources of this area, in the interests of the area's stability. Indians at various levels are capable of absorbing and utilizing the highest kind of sophisticated technology for this purpose. At the moment, the political will to do this is lacking. Perhaps it will never arise. It is for those who see the urgency of the matter, whether they are in the government or outside, to think it out and act.

Creative thinking can exert pressure on irrational elements, both governmental and private, whose actions are bringing so much distortion and misery into the lives of millions in this area. If there is any substance in India's philosophies, and any influence in her unique, pacific traditions, then an individual from India joining the elite can, apart from contributing intelligence and competence, help to run the new system with compassion.

This will be the most valuable contribution that he can make to it, and may assure its very survival. However efficient the new

machines may be in the production of goods and services for the benefit of Man and Nature, they cannot be human. Therefore, among those who use them, there must be individuals who spread the influence of humane traditions.

Production has always involved community or cooperative activity. Everyone except children, the sick, and old person, must work together to be able to live together. The better and more organized their cooperation and production is, the higher the standard of life they can lead. Today the Welfare State could work well if only the cooperation and efficiency in production were of a higher order, so that even if 30% of the population, such as children, sick people and the old, do not produce, they can be provided for. The Welfare State broke down in England because the production system did not operate to the level of providing for those unable to work.

As an illustration, we see that in Europe and America, because of advanced technology, 5% of the individuals produce enough food for all, besides being able to export millions of tons of grain to Africa and Asia. The "village" communities there differ radically from those in Africa, or Asia, as the relationship of the "individual" with land and the machines that tend it has undergone a radical change.

What happens, if this new system comes about, to the "small is beautiful" approach, or to the life of an individual in relation to a small community?

As an economic precept, "small is beautiful" should not mean restricting production of goods and services to small units alone. This cannot work well, because today individuals demand a higher quality and a greater variety of goods than small scale industry can provide. The precept "small is beautiful" may encourage the production of some exquisite artifacts but it does not create the machines and technology which ensure a high standard of living. "Small is beautiful" will not work if it means restrictions on consumption; and sacrifices of an order that a modern individual may not be willing or able to make, such as giving up television, travel and the variety of goods, services and entertainment. Nor will the "small and beautiful" society be able to withstand the vitality of the new machines with their technology.

Will the concept of "small is beautiful" be more attractive than "subsidized" communities where most individuals will have no work? Full pay and all security and insurance without work! However, mere enjoyment without work would not be satisfying. Which of these two would an individual choose?

An individual survives ideally when he lives in a happy, harmonious community. "Small is beautiful" is a concept that can be practised by dedicated, disciplined individuals who have seen through the excitement, restlessness, and frustrations of competitive, aggressive societies. To maintain the individuality as well as the quality of life, compact, small societies with the supporting background of the new system, would afford a human a good chance of survival.

No community, no group, however disciplined, dedicated or inspired, can forgo forever the comforts and advantages of the modern centralized system of production, transport and distribution.

One notices a very interesting phenomenon in parts of North America. Special subsidies and transport facilities have made it possible to obtain oranges, apples, papayas, grapes and all kinds of vegetables and pulses throughout the year in the heart of Arctic Canada. New techniques of agriculture such as plastic hothouses and computerized automatic heat and moisture control have enabled people in cities such as Toronto, Winnipeg, Kingston and Montreal to grow vegetables, pulses, etc., even in the winter.

So a new "community" relationship of mutuality and interdependence is developing between agricultural producers and people with traditional urban vocations within a limited geographical area.

"Small and beautiful" can become practical and profitable with the appropriate technology. It can coexist with the centralized system. Small scale production can bring joy, purpose and a feeling of fulfilment into the lives of millions. However, in this age, a small scale industry is not profitable, and would collapse if not supported by subsidies. In India, the Khadi and Village Industries Organization is very heavily subsidized. It would not survive otherwise. For the reason stated above, and to help to build up com-

munity activity around spinning, weaving and handicrafts, this support is necessary. There is no reason why village industry should not survive side by side with large-scale industry. The new system should be prepared to subsidize small enterprise. Maybe even a few millions will be able to organize themselves into Gandhian communities for creative living. These village communities and ashrams will certainly bring a new dimension to life. They will add to the variety and excitement of the new age.

Underneath the intelligent, competent management organization by the elite of a huge production-distribution-consumption system, an innumerable variety of "sub-cultures" can flourish. From Gandhian decentralized village democracies to ashrams feeding, housing and clothing hundreds, millions can be occupied without having to work to produce anything. What the Dalai Lama once said can be put into practice: two-thirds of the population can, if they wish, pursue a path to enlightenment without having to worry about obtaining shelter or clothing. Everything will be as free as air.

A few years hence one member of a family can be one of the elite, another may live in a Gandhian village, the third in an ashram. Family traditions and motivations to keep together for security and a sense of continuity will change as emotional and intellectual requirements alter and new perspectives appear to widen the horizon of experience.

Unless man, the individual, is freed from the anxiety and stress of living, he cannot engage himself wholeheartedly in cultural or spiritual pursuits. Even if one lives in the high Himalayan caves, one has to be fed by a disciple or a devotee. In the old days in India, all ashrams were supported and protected by the rich and powerful. Even today, ashrams, temples, mosques and gurdwaras cannot run without contributions from the rich. It is the same story all over the world and has been so right through history. In old Tibet, a few of the Lamas had to go on long journeys every few months and engage themselves in profitable trade that would help support the monasteries. Why not then today use powerful machines for the same purpose?

Of course, the change to the new order may be very gradual,

owing to the lack of new energy sources, new kinds of materials required for the new machines and adequate competence in running them, or owing to sheer exhaustion after the collapse of the old system. But often in human history, and especially during the past fifty years, changes that might earlier have taken centuries have occurred within decades. What one now imagines would take decades, may happen in months. For example, new techniques of utilizing solar power, the power of superconducting magnets, the power of nuclear fusion or space stations, can alter the present systems in months.

But human beings with wide vision and deep compassion will be required to run a highly complicated, centralized system dependent on sophisticated technology. Compassion and humaneness of a high order will be most necessary to enable the individual to survive in the new, complex, interlinked world.

How does a man acquire compassion? Is it a part of intelligence, or beyond and above it? Can compassion (karuna) tackle and solve the problems of living, or will it only transcend them?

Can the elite, because of their holistic intelligence and rationalism, see the necessity of bringing order and harmony to the system by removing stress caused by inequality or inability?

Or will the philosophers, mystics and saints, who are supposed to have an intuitive, transcendental awareness, be able to bring a new dimension to the actions of individuals? Can the elite and the mystic work together? Will they function as distinct groups or will they merge into one?

CHAPTER
IX

THE INDIVIDUAL HIS ENVIRONMENT HIS THOUGHTS AND BEYOND



The mind of man the individual has created modern science and technology. This is a powerful as well as disturbing new force which is creating tensions, problems and frustrations for its creator, the mind, as well as projecting exciting dreams of plenty and prosperity.

Not that previously the mind of man did not create problems for itself. But in the past the dimensions of these problems were limited by geography, by lack of transport facilities and by the limitations imposed by the lack of technology for the exploitation of resources. Above all, the mind was then still functioning within certain restrictions and disciplines of tribe, tradition, caste or religion.

The new force of science and technology, however, breaks all barriers; in fact it can operate efficiently only when it functions on a wider basis, with no such restrictions.

Thus its power in the hands of ignorant and greedy individuals

to exploit and destroy, to disorganize old life patterns, and to bring sorrow and suffering to millions, is enormous.

The mind of man has also the potential for creating plenty. But the very capacity of the mind stimulates it with more and more exhausting as well as exciting new desires. And the mind finds in all this turmoil, no peace or harmony, joy or stability.

The very nature of this new power of science and technology demands centralization of the processes of planning, finance, production, management, distribution and sale. In this hierarchical and often authoritarian centralized system the individual feels lost and functions as a faceless number, an object which is evaluated according to its capacity to produce goods and services. And, although science and technology greatly increase production, yet poverty, hunger and misery still persist; war and destruction are common experiences; violence, insecurity and corruption grow.

Science and technology alone cannot create a society, a community of individuals who feel the need for each other, want to care for each other, and thirst to create harmony, beauty and joy around them.

Mind, the creator of technology and science, must therefore rediscover itself in order to create conditions for a community to grow out of these conflicts and tensions; it must awaken to intelligence, competence and compassion. How and when is compassion possible, since it is only compassionate intelligence that will make it possible to bring discipline, order, and harmony to the life of an individual in this restless age of science and technology?

To survive, an individual requires order and harmony within and around him. Ignorance, poverty, exploitation, involvement in power, pride, anger and hate, inhibit the joys of living and bring about the destruction of the individual through suffering and stress.

Order and symmetry do exist all round the individual—in Nature—but in his ignorance he cannot realize it. He struggles to survive with no understanding of Nature, and through his wrong actions does more damage to himself, his environment and his fellow humans.

The individual is an integral part of his environment. When he

acts as if he is separate from it, contradictions arise and result in stress and suffering for him and others.

Land, water and air, mountains, rivers, sea and forests, animals, birds and insects: all contribute to the individual's existence.

In ancient times, man had a deep respect for the *chaitanya*, the power of Nature. He expressed it in rituals, festivals, worship and dances. Living in forests and caves, with snakes, crocodiles, birds and wild animals around, he understood his environment and his dependence on it. He worshipped nature; this satisfied him emotionally and protected his environment.

He was in tune with his surroundings, living in balance with Nature, whose language he could understand. The pace of his life was steady; he was not greedy. He did not think of exploiting Nature for power or profit, but was happy to live with it.

It was because his mind was unclouded by greed, and had not been influenced by the thought of power, that he could read warnings of changes in the weather from the sounds and behaviour of birds; from that of insects, forecast famines or floods; and glean secrets even from stones and trees.

What was this deep and sensitive relationship of the individual with his surroundings? Was it only physical? He knew that if he did not manure and irrigate his land, it would not feed him; if he dirtied the rivers or the seas, he would not have clean water to drink or fish for his food; and if he destroyed forests, there would be a desert around him.

This mutual dependence of the individual and his environment is a simple fact of life. Then why is the individual today blind to this fact? How has he lost his sensitivity to his surroundings?

Ignorance and greed deprive the individual of his sensitivity to Nature. Man is stupid because he forgets the laws of Nature, and the fact that his very survival depends on his following them.

The other reason for his stupidity is the enormous explosion of populations. The natural mode of man's survival, along with that of his environment, is disturbed and destroyed by population pressures.

In the mountainous areas, for thousands of years, agriculture was done by "zooming" the hillsides. Man simply burnt the forest

and broadcast maize or barley seeds. The soil, made richer by the potash contained in the cinders of the trees, yielded bumper crops for a few years. When the fertility of that area of land was depleted the community moved on, and the land recovered its fertility in ten or twenty years.

With a population now ten times greater than fifty years ago, this kind of cultivation of land brought disaster to man and Nature. Zoomed land was not sufficient to support the increased population. Deprived of the cohesive force and protection of the forests, whatever top soil remained was washed away in the heavy rains, leaving the land barren.

The explosion of population has brought about, all over the world, an exodus from the farms and forests to the towns and cities. This reduces the individual's contact with Nature. Many do not ever see a tree or a blade of grass in these new concrete jungles. How then can birds or trees or stones speak to them ? In the constant roar and rush of vicious traffic, they have no time and energy to listen. As they breathe polluted air twenty-four hours of the day, many have forgotten what fresh air is like.

In the towns and cities the individual is always in a rush, trying to defend himself from crowds and noise, meeting persons in whom he is not interested, or with whom he is in conflict or competition. He is always tense and on guard, and at the end of the day is utterly exhausted.

Only through contact with Nature can an individual relax and regain this energy. With trees, clouds, rivers and the sea he finds the peace which he lost in crowded cities. The change in the tempo and rhythm of his life brings new energy to the individual. The sense of peace experienced when surrounded by trees, waterfalls, the sea, the mountains, rocks and sand revives him.

But in industrialized countries, and even in those where that process is just beginning, an individual cannot easily escape from his prisons of concrete, asphalt and steel. Nature is too far away, even by bus or train. On weekends the individual tries to escape, and finds himself instead in a 10 km traffic jam on his way out as well as on his return journey. This experience exhausts him even more ! Seaside and mountain resorts are so crowded, and every-

thing so commercialized, that these can no longer attract tl individual.

Besides the population explosion, the scientific and techn logical revolution, too, brought about an estrangement betwee the individual and nature. Formerly he felt that he depended o his environment for his survival. Now with the power that scienc and technology has brought him, his attitude towards Nature i one of domination, of control and of exploitation. How can he b in tune with that which he wants to dominate and exploit? Hi sensitivities are blunted by his might and power, and he is nc longer sensible in his relationship with Nature.

The ravages of the individual on his environment have compelled him to live in deserts, dust bowls, swamps and eroded barren lands, where only a decade or two ago, there was an abundance of life and ample opportunity of survival. The impoverishment of his environment now makes the individual feel insecure and restless. The whole of West Asia, once the bread-basket of the world, is today a desert, tense and anxious, as Man has in his greed depleted the original agricultural resources.

In India during the last thirty years or so, the pace of this estrangement between the individual and Nature has grown to an alarming extent. As a result even his responses to certain cultural, social and intellectual happenings around him are becoming crude and uncivilized.

Speed and noise, the vulgar display of wealth and the snobbish arrogance of position and power seem to appeal to the individual now, whether in a city or a village. He no longer has the refinement that is the result of a relaxed response to events and happenings. He is tense, nervous, anxious and worried, and, therefore, unmannerly in his behaviour. He has lost his culture by losing his contact with Nature.

Look at any of the industrial suburbs today in India or in any other LDC. The individual, who a few years ago was still in his village, but is now transplanted to a place with no opportunity for contact with nature, is a totally different person.

True, his motivations have changed. He is more anxious now to make money and enjoy life than to belong to a community with

strong taboos and restrictions on his behaviour. But unfortunately it seems that once he has lost that contact he has done so forever. No longer can he enjoy the simple pleasures of trees, birds, rivers, lakes, the sea and mountains. He is changed. His priorities and objectives are different. He does not care for others. He can be crude and cruel.

There is another, and more subtle aspect of this relationship of the individual with Nature that is very important. The individual and Nature are an integral part of the same biosphere where they both live and complement each other. The tides caused by the pull of the moon on the sea and diurnal magnetic changes, influence Nature as well as man. Cosmic radiations, their frequency and intensity also affect them both.

During the solar eclipse in India on 16 February 1980, the effect of the various radiations on plants, animals and humans was clearly noticeable during the period of totality. Plants shrivelled and humans felt disoriented, some got terrified, a few of them due to conditioning, others because they were sensitive.

Successful scientific experiments have been made, beginning with Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose's experiments in the 1920s, to prove that plants are sensitive to external influences apart from the strictly physical. Books have been written, among them the famous book, *The Secret Life of Plants.** Some of the experiments have "proved" that plants can "feel" human thoughts even before they are expressed in words! An individual who intends to cut a tree creates an instant response of "horror" and "sorrow", measurable on a "lie detector", in that tree. There have since been scientific investigations into the responses of plants to human emotions, and these have been recorded on modern instruments.

At Findhorn on the Moray Firth, a remote place in North-west Scotland, a few enthusiasts were suddenly drawn, out of curiosity and sensitivity, into studying the "secret" life of plants. Their experiments are truly remarkable. The colony, which was started in 1965, still continues its experiments today, and scientists, both

* Tompkins, Peter and Bird, Christopher *The Secret Life of Plants* (London: Penguin Books, 1974).

agronomists and others, have visited and evaluated their experiences.

People like Lord Trevelyan have written about them, and these books transport one to a dimension of experience not easily available to an individual in the Western World. One should read *The Magic of Findhorn* by Paul Hawken, a remarkable book about his experience in this field.

It is claimed in this book that the "Devas" or Energies of the trees talked to a select group of highly sensitive persons, especially a lady who used to lead this group in prayers and meditation. These "Devas", or spirits of plants, according to this book, expressed their dismay at the rate at which Man was destroying his environment and thus killing himself.

This group believed that they had been chosen as one of the "contact points" of the Devas on earth. The group would try to make people on Earth aware of the tragedy that they would face if they persisted in their cruel and callous behaviour towards plant life.

This group felt that if they followed the Devas' instructions they would be able to grow in the desolate area of Findhorn fruits and vegetables of shapes, sizes, and tastes never before experienced by the Earth People.

It is recorded in this book and other documents and photographs that the most astonishing achievements in farming and horticulture were reached. According to the local agricultural experts, and the available text-books on gardening, nothing could be grown in the Findhorn soil, largely composed of dusty sand and gravel, except perhaps, a few lettuces and radishes. Peter and Eileen Caddy were the first of the group. They came to Findhorn in November 1962. With guidance from realizations of necessary action reached by Eileen during daily meditation, they cleared the land and enriched it with compost. All their actions were in harmony with their thoughts during meditation. By May 1964, the land had become lush and productive, producing a large variety of fruit and vegetables of amazing size and flavour. Red cabbages grown there weighed as much as 17 to 19 kg (or 38 to 42 lbs) ! By this time the group, which had grown, had started receiving

spiritual guidance from the "Devas" that put them in touch with truths about the plants around them.*

Even more remarkable than the produce of their garden, was the easy, natural way in which this group could communicate with the Devas.

The Devas told this group that they would choose various spots on this earth to try and awaken the ignorant Earth people to the mysteries of the secret life of the plant world, and help them re-establish the equilibrium lost because of their stupidity and arrogance.

Unless such an experience as in Findhorn is available to many in other parts of the world, and the relationship between the individual and his environment changes, this will remain a romantic idea.

In Pune, India, on an island of the Mula-Mutha river, an ex-army officer, Shri Naik, has been experimenting with the cultivation of plants from all parts of the world. Hundreds of trees that could never have grown in this part of Western Maharashtra are "induced" to thrive successfully. Shri Naik talks to the plants as if to his children, and he says, they respond magnificently to "love and care". The result of it is there to see for anyone who cares to.

Plants have been found to respond to music and human affection. In many parts of the world experiments have successfully been undertaken in this field.

If human thought and behaviour can really influence Nature, then should not Nature influence human thought and feelings? (If the humans still have feelings, that is.)

Some experiments indicate that stones, like metals, often radiate energy. Scientists are greatly interested in this subject of radiations from stones. During past ages, tremendous heat and energy transformed and shaped them. *Stones millions of years old are, as it were, trapped and immobilized energy!* Precious and semi-precious stones are said to radiate energy that conforms to the character of an individual who wears them, and bring him good luck or fortune. Indian astrology also believes that certain precious stones are

* *The Secret Life of Plants*, pp. 310-314.

not suitable for particular individuals, and, if worn by them, will have an adverse effect. Also the precious stone has to be worn on the correct finger. Is this also a mere superstition? Many persons have had very strange and verifiable experiences with such stones.

Worshipping a stone image is transferring or communicating the feelings and emotions of an individual to a stone. The ceremony of setting up an image in a temple is called *pran prathishta* (stabilizing life). Can the emotions of many individuals be thus "stabilized" in one image? Can these images then become *jagrata* — alive? Or is it all a play of the mind of man?

If man does not try to understand Nature, he will not survive for long. There is an inner joy and harmony in Nature that can soothe and inspire man. There is also a tremendous vitality in things that grow, flow, or just exist. An individual can share this if he knows how.

This is not a trick of the mind. Nor is it auto-hypnosis. Many poets, painters and scientists have experienced the joy and energy of being one with Nature. It is not an uncommon phenomenon.

Children, even when they are very young — two or three years old — can be shown how to reach this joy and energy. They learn so easily and carry this capacity to draw energy from Nature all the rest of their life.

An individual can feel "one" with a tree, a flower, a stone or a river, if he would only let go of his egoistic illusion of being separate and superior to Nature. But unfortunately many today, arrogant and ignorant, wrapped up in themselves, do not have the right attitude towards their environment. Only if ten in one hundred in a society can experience this oneness with Nature, perhaps the rest will be inspired by them. Maybe then the world would be a different place to live in!

The sun setting behind trees, or on the ocean, the long drawn out dawn in the northern hemisphere, the thunder and lightning in mountain valleys, can awaken in the individual, if he is intelligent and sensitive, a feeling of unity and joy. In reality he can only survive as a part of the totality of existence.

There is now a mathematical theory which suggests that the whole of the cosmos may be contained in every part of it. Ernst

Mach's principle, to which Fred Hoyle and Jayant Narlikar gave a mathematical expression, stated that the mass (which is energy) of a single particle is determined by the entire universe.

Therefore, the mass (and energy) of a single particle contains information about the entire universe and influences it. "The individual is the world," as J. Krishnamurti says.

A common example in scientific terms is the optical hologram, where a photographic transparency records an "interference" pattern between two components of a split laser beam. When a laser beam is projected through the developed photographic transparency of an object, a three-dimensional wave front reconstruction of the photograph — in other words, the "illusion" of a solid object which in fact is not present — occurs.

An amazing property of this hologram is that if a small part of that photographic transparency is cut and exposed to the coherent laser beam we still see an entire three dimensional reconstruction of the whole of the photographed object, though the resolution (clearness) of the "solid" object in totally empty space is not perfect, and the picture is a little blurred, that is all.

This seems to indicate that any small piece of the photographic transparency contains complete information on the subject of the photograph. The part contains the whole. As the Hindu precept says, "What is in the *pinda* (individual or seed) is in the *Bramhanda* (the cosmos).*

As a matter of fact, it seems that the universe functions as a giant hologram, a three-dimensional picture projected through various kinds of laser beams, in which the part contains the whole and changes and is changed with it. By analogy we can see the importance of the individual as a part/whole of the universe.

What an amazing universe it is, where there is a constant interpenetration and influencing of the whole by the part, and vice versa! But only a handful of top scientists and mathematicians of the modern world can fully understand and experience what

* When the early atomic scientists such as Rutherford managed to determine the structure of the atom, they found, in the movement of its electrons around the central nucleus of protons and neutrons, an analogy to the movement of the planets around the sun.

Einstein, Max Planck, Neils Bohr or Eric Blum have stated; and they have the capacity to understand only after long years of training and accumulation of knowledge.

The ignorant mind is accustomed to think-feel-experience that space and time are somehow permanent and immutable. According to Einstein's general theory of relativity, time and space are not absolute, but are "distorted gravitational fields".

His famous example of two identically constructed clocks that are synchronized and then put in gravitational fields of different strengths is interesting and fascinating. The clock that is nearer a strong gravitational field goes slower than the one close to a weaker field.

Two identical measuring rods also behave in a strange way in gravitational fields of differing strength. The measuring rod nearer the strong field stretches itself, for space extends in strong gravitational fields.

As time, according to the mathematical formulae evolved by Einstein and verified by experiments, runs faster in a weak gravitational field and slower in a strong one, and as space is also relative, what happens to an individual and his sense of identity in this universe of energy and intelligence? Only an "expanded" awareness can allow an individual to experience this fully.

The change in the gravitational field (that is the change in the strength of gravitation as we move from one location to another, is what the physicist means by "curvature of space". According to the modern approach "matter" – objects and individuals – does not consist of independent substances placed in pre-existing space and time. It is neither permanent nor "substantial".

Mass is energy, and an "event" which occurs in the curvature of space. Perhaps an understanding of the approach that time flows at different rates depending on where in a gravitational field it is measured will enable an understanding of the so-called "paranormal" phenomena such as precognition, life after death, ghosts, etc.

Mind, matter, energy, thoughts, desires and happenings in our day-to-day existence are all expressions of unified existence.

Einstein said in 1918, at the official celebrations of Max Planck's sixtieth birthday, "I believe with Schopenhauer that one of the strongest motives that leads men to art and science is escape from everyday life with its painful crudities, hopeless dreariness, from fetters of one's own ever shifting desires. A finely composed nature longs to escape from personal life into the world of objective perception and thoughts; this desire may be compared with the townsman's irresistible longing to escape from his noisy, cramped surroundings into high mountains, where the eye ranges freely through the still pure air, and fondly traces out the restful contours apparently built for eternity."

With this negative motive there goes a positive one. Man tries to make for himself, in the fashion that suits him best, a simplified and intelligent picture of the world. Then he tries to some extent *to substitute this cosmos of his for the world of experience*, and thus overcome it. This is what the painter, the poet, the speculative philosopher, and the natural scientist do, each in his own fashion. Each makes this cosmos and its construction the pivot of his emotional life in order to find in this way the peace and security that we cannot find within the all-too-narrow realm of swirling personal experience.

Einstein said, further, "... The longing to behold harmony (cosmic) is the source of the inexhaustible patience and perseverance shown by Max Planck."

To survive an individual must attempt to reach out for the widest and the most subtle experiences. This attempt makes living worthwhile.

In 1961 a young anthropologist, Carlos Castaneda, subjected himself to an extraordinary apprenticeship to be able to get a fascinating glimpse of a "yaqui" (Mexican) Indian's world of "non-ordinary reality". He records these experiments and experiences during his apprenticeship in a series of books, such as *A Separate Reality, Tales of Power* and others.

According to him, through discipline and understanding, an individual can experience "a separate reality". The energy centred in land, rivers, rocks and trees can then be made to enter another field. This energy can transport the trained individual beyond the

reality which he usually experiences to a new and dynamic r Could these energy centres be the curvature of space that E writes about?

There are some *siddhas* in the Himalayas and elsewher assure you that a particular spot in the valley on the mo top or by the side of the river has "special" power to hel Shri Aurobindo was certain that great power for the "divini of man will be attracted towards Auroville in Pondicherr soon. Perhaps it is already there!

In Gangtok, Sikkim, when a project was undertaken to b stupa according to the Mahayana Buddhist tradition, a great yogi – the great Thulshi Rimpoche – undertook to find the spot for it. He wandered all over the hills and valleys, shak head sadly, till he came to a glade where two horses, one whi the other black, were grazing. The venerable Rimpoche jumped for joy, fixing a wooden peg at the exact spot wh thought the "beneficent energy" was the strongest.

Later, supervising the building of the Stupa and the entom of sacred relics from Tibet, India, Sikkim and Bhutan in was very strict with the masons and carpenters, often shout them for some inaccuracies in the measurements of angl curves of surfaces.

When asked why he was so particular about accuracies in surements, he said, "How then will the energies (divine) c trate on this spot? The Devas will not descend and dance the Stupa is crude and not correctly built."

Can an individual ordinarily, in his daily life, transce limited sensibilities and connect himself with the energie "wise" persons say are a part of his environment? Will s experience help him in his mundane life? Is it true that transcendental experience can change an individual or hel or does it not really make any difference? In the case of the in Gangtok, the personal experience certainly has bee positive.

Any individual can undertake simple experiments with vironment and experience the truth or otherwise of their ef him. In Japan, through centuries of diligent practice, a ve

"science" has grown up indicating the effects of the position of the objects of everyday life around an individual. Stones, trees, sand, water and wood, placed in the correct position in the garden, create an "atmosphere" of peace, harmony and joy.

Inside the house the position of doors, windows, tables, chairs, carpets, pictures and stairways can make the difference between disease and good health. There are, in Japan, "consultants" who give advice to housewives or businessmen on how to arrange objects around them and make a losing business a successful one, or make a husband (or wife) who is unfaithful to return lovingly to the family fold ! Americans are keen to see the profitable side of any new (or old) idea, and there are such consultancies in all parts of the USA, who afford you advice (at a reasonable price !) on matters ranging from the colour of your curtains to washbasins in bathrooms with the specific aim of making you healthy, wealthy and wise !

That a particular arrangement of furniture in your room or objects on your table can please you, and a different one irritate you, is understandable. But whether such arrangements can bring you luck or not is still to be tested. Some individuals have derived amazing results (and good fun !) out of such experiments in arranging objects around them.

It is to be seen by experiment whether it is just the colours, positions and artistic designs of objects, or some power or force of the planes and angles that they make with each other, that influence the individual.

The concept of a *kinkhor* (a mandala, in Tibet) of figures and especially colours and designs is used to "capture" and "focus" beneficial energies on the individual who is praying or meditating on it.

There are "fierce" *kinkhors* in Tibet to fight evil influences, and milder ones to bring grace and *aashirwad* (blessings) on the disciple.

That some of these Tibetan *kinkhor thankas* (scrolls) do affect the individual has been experienced. One of them was followed by an evil influence, a highly negative energy (it was found later),

that caused a series of very serious accidents to the individual concerned in whose possession this *thanka* had happened to come.

Till the *thanka* was identified as having been followed by evil energy, and subsequently purified in October 1957 by no less a noble saint-mystic than Kentze Rimpoche himself in Gangtok, this individual, who used to pride himself on his robust health, was helplessly sick and miserable, and came close to death after a fall together with his horse into a Himalayan gorge.

Asked how this evil influence could follow a picture drawn on silk — drawn hundreds of years ago — the venerable Lama said that it was "all a play of the mind". If the mind is weak, energies that are not beneficial can influence it. Once it is realised that the mind is *shunya* (empty), such energies do not affect the individual. Knowledge, said the Rimpoche Lama, releases you of all suffering.

In all cultures — Chinese, Japanese, Indonesian and Egyptian — figures, signs, symbols and even buildings do not only represent energy — *Shakti* or *Jagadamba.* Often they are supposed to bring this energy into focus, or make its manifestation at a given point in time and space, more powerful and useful.

All traditions have used *mudras* (hand gestures) to convey feelings or manifestations of Energy. Together with *asanas* (bodily postures) and *pranayama* (yogic breathing), such *mudras* are supposed to create Energy, or at least help focus it.

The Pyramids in Egypt represent one of the most ancient examples of the establishment of contact with energy and of its focussing. This interesting phenomenon has been verified by experiment.

For thousands of years many had wondered why the Pyramids had been built at all. It was said that the secret of the pyramids was lost — was there one? Others said it was only the exploitation of slave labour for the glorification of the tyrant Pharaohs.

Hassan Abbas Zaki, the finance and foreign-trade minister of Gamal Abdul Nasser, was also a great Sufi Saint, a scholar and mystic, well versed in many "occult" sciences, including the Hindu-Buddhist Tantras, and read voraciously all manner of books about realizing the ultimate truth. He had made many experiments with replicas of pyramids of the exact and scientific proportions which had been developed by the ancient Egyptians thousands of years

ago. His pyramids were of course small, no more than two or three feet in height, and were of wood or steel.

His experiments with these home-made pyramids were chiefly in mummification — preserving flesh. He successfully experimented with keeping a piece of raw meat inside his wooden pyramid in its centre but at a height of exactly one-third the distance from the base to the apex. After forty eight hours, he discovered that the piece of meat could be removed and preserved anywhere without putting it into cold storage!

The "rays" that the pyramids are supposed to capture or "focus" are called "minus-green" rays. France, Italy, Germany and the USA have many "experts" who claim to have achieved miraculous results with these rays, even levitation. Some claim that the pyramids of Cheops were built with the help of these rays — and consequently there were no slaves and no exploitation!

All Communist countries experiment with energy. Czechoslovakia has been dabbling with pyramids for the last 20 years or so. Today in Czechoslovakia one can buy a glass pyramid about 15 cm tall into which you can insert razor blades to keep them sharp for months together. Thousands have used these contraptions, and seem to make no complaints about them.

According to one of the Yogic systems, an individual is supposed to have six "bodies", fields of energy; each one more and more subtle and powerful. The *annamaya kosha* (food-sheath energy field) is the closest with which we live and experience the objects around us. Food, water and air sustain this energy field, and disharmony and disease manifest themselves in it.

The second field, more subtle than the *annamaya kosha*, is the *pranamaya kosha* (the life-force sheath). It can reach up to the very principle of energy, that is with the life force itself, the *prana*. It is because of the contact with *prana* (life) through this field of energy that an individual is alive. When this contact is lost the *annamaya kosha* "dies". No amount of food, clothing and shelter can help if the *prana* contact is lost. The energy of a *prana* is contacted through this sheath. All the vitality and movements of an individual originate in this sheath. Any distortion or malfunctioning of this sheath brings about disease, and ultimately death. Such

distortion in the *pranamaya kosha* affects the *annamaya kosha. Pranayama* control and discipline of the breathing process, is supposed to keep this sheath in good form and enable the food sheath, *annamaya kosha,* to receive life and energy for its functioning. All bodily functions such as eating, digesting, eliminating, procreation, seeing, tasting, touching, hearing and smelling are due to the energy that the *prana* brings to the body. The body cannot function if this contact with *prana* is lost. Even partial damage to this contact through noise, air pollution or the incessant movement of modern urban life, can and does bring illness of body or mind.

The next, even more subtle sheath, is the *manomaya kosha* (the mind-sheath). This sheath enables an individual to think, feel and dream. It is in this energy field that archetypal symbols, gods, goddesses, heroes, devils and ghosts are created by the mind. As the *pranamaya kosha* reaches out to the *pranic* energy, the *manomaya kosha* has contact with the mind energy which formulates *namaroopa* – name and form. It is in this subtle kosha that both the "I" and the "world" are simultaneously born – *pratitya samutpada.* The *manomaya kosha,* the most powerful sheath, is the one where *dnyan* (knowledge), awakening and intelligence are possible. It is here also that the darkest ignorance and suffering originate owing to distortions. Ordinarily the consciousness of an individual can only reach the clear state of awakening in this energy field.

Existence is possible only if proper contact is maintained with this field. The disciplines of yoga and meditation help to maintain a clear and constant contact with this energy field. Any distortion or malfunctioning in this sheath must be prevented. Damage and malfunctioning of this energy field is more common than in the other grosser ones.

Hate, anger and anxiety, leading to exploitation and domination, originate because of the malfunctioning of the *manomaya kosha.* Unless an individual is seriously trained from childhood to keep good contact with this energy field, he will suffer stress and sorrow, in wars and exploitation.

These two subtler energy fields, the *pranamaya* and *manomaya,* are not individualized ones. That is, these energy fields, according to the ancient yogic experience, are "generalized" fields of energy.

The *annamaya kosha* is an individualized one; one individual's body ends at a specific point in space and time, and the body of another individual, or an object, starts from there or at a distance.

The *pranamaya kosha* and *manomaya kosha* extend and interconnect beyond the individual, and the limitations of space and time do not affect them. So an individual, separate and distinct in his *annamaya kosha,* is connected with other individuals in the *pranamaya kosha* and the *manomaya kosha.* An event in the *pranamaya kosha* or *manomaya kosha* of any individual affects other individuals everywhere.

These are experimentally verifiable facts. But like any experiment in the scientific field, training and discipline are essential if such an experiment is to lead an individual to have a more subtle, energetic and expanded experience.

An even more subtle and more powerful energy field is the *vidnyanamaya kosha,* the energy field where knowledge is possible. If the *manomaya kosha* is the energy field where *namaroopa,* name and form, ideas and archetype symbols and systems are generated, in the *vidnyanamaya kosha* it is the very understanding of the energy principles that is reached. It is in this field that Einstein arrived at the general theory of relativity, Planck conceived the ideas of quantum physics and mechanics, and Schrodinger derived his wave equation. It is here too that the understanding and experience of the relationship of the "I" with the "not–I" is reached.

"Aham Brahmasmi" (I am Brahma), or "Sarvam Khalu Idam Brahma" (all this is Brahma) is possible if the Individual contacts the *vidnyanamaya kosha.* Who he reaches it the individual is no longer a separate and distinct entity.

The next field, more subtle and powerful still, is the *chinmaya kosha,* the energy field of pure consciousness. No formulas, no systems, no name, no form, no knowledge, no conceptual activity is possible in this very powerful field of energy. The individual when he reaches this kosha is Enlightened.

The Buddha, Christ, Muhammad and Mahavir reached, even whilst in their limited *annamaya, pranamaya, manomaya* and *vidnyanamaya koshas,* this chinmaya field of "infinite energy" consciousness, and illuminated the path of all sentient beings, present

and potential. A Buddha then could communicate his experience without words, direct and forever. Chinmaya chidakasha is beyond time and space, and yet can act in the field of limited consciousness.

The last and the most subtle and powerful of all energy fields is the *anandmaya kosha* which is bliss, beautitude and karuna (love) and when an individual reaches this energy field he is no longer an individual, nor is there an energy field. The drop is the ocean.

The point to understand is that an individual does not end with his body. If he thinks that he has limits and that because of these limits he is in opposition and conflict with that which is beyond him, he suffers.

Only with the realization and experiencing of the actual fact that he, as an individual, extends indefinitely, can he exist in harmony and happiness and create these conditions around him.

Both the *chinmaya* and *anandmaya koshas* are beyond words, and only *shunya*, silence, can reach them.

The problem before an individual is that with his very limited sensibilities he can only understand all that we have said above, or things said in other places, times and cultures, through symbols, words and concepts. That is, he does not understand it at all! Symbols can take you, perhaps, out of the limited conceptual thinking and show you a way, but they cannot make you reach the experience of the reality.

In Southern Egypt nearly 3500 years ago there lived and died a great Pharaoh, Seti I. His son Rameses II was more famous as the unifier of upper and lower Egypts. Seti I's tomb near Asuyt in upper Egypt, is a most remarkable treasure-house of art and history. Some of the finest and most well preserved statues and fresco paintings in the whole of Egypt are in this cave-tomb.

Many of these statues and paintings depict Egyptian gods and goddesses with queer animal heads and bodies. These were worshipped during the age of the Pharaohs.

A British lady of very ancient lineage and a great scholar of Egyptology and ancient religions, considers herself the "daughter" of Seti I, and lives in these tombs and takes care of them. When asked why the old Egyptian gods and goddesses have such queer heads and bodies, her answer was interesting.

She said that these gods and goddesses are in fact "energies". They are powerful, majestic and eternal. To the uninitiated they cannot disclose themselves as symbols of this great energy except in crude, awesome forms. If they were to reveal themselves in their true forms, the minds and bodies of the uninitiated would not be able to bear the experience and they would be instantly destroyed. These gods and goddesses, these Eternal Energies, can, therefore, *chakshuhu* (eyes made of leather) — a reference to the mortality of Hathor, Horus or Ptah.

That is why, perhaps, Arjuna also had to be given *divyam chakshuhu* (special sight), when he prayed to Lord Krishna to reveal to him his true aspect — *Vishwaroopa*. Krishna said to Arjuna that his mundane sensibilities would not be able to experience Krishna's Divine Form and, therefore, Arjuna's *charma chakshuhu* (eyes made of leather) — a reference to the mortality of human flesh — had to be abandoned for stronger ones.

At the spectacle of the glory and splendour of His Divine Form, in which all forms and names simultaneously existed and were destroyed, Arjuna fainted. This was a transcendental experience too great for him to endure. He prayed to Lord Krishna to return to his human form, so that he, Arjuna, might regain his normal consciousness, that is, the limited one, as he could not survive in cosmic consciousness for long. Even he, a great *bhakta* (devotee), was not trained to survive it. None of us "Arjunas" could, however hard we may try, survive such a "Divine" experience whilst in this body-mind-intellect existence.

Einstein and other great scientists also present us with a "*Vishwaroopa*". Their holistic vision is beyond the common man. The scientific as well as the intuitive "spiritual" vision calls for certain training and disciplines before the individual can experience it.

What are these disciplines and training? Do they really lead to an expansion of consciousness or are they just a stimulation of certain centres in the brain that create illusions which the individual mistakes for reality?

Laser beams, i.e., light beams of enormous concentration and power, can "create" holograms which project "solid" objects into

empty space. The "interference" of concentrated magnetic, cosmic, gravitational or electrical fields can also, in special circumstances, create the same illusion of solid, continuous, objects in space and time.

The human brain is made up of three trillion cells. Most of them carry electromagnetic currents which produce sensations of sight, smell, taste, etc. These cells are also affected by gravitation and by cosmic radiation. The trillions of "circuits" of the brain cells stimulated by sight, sound, taste, smell, touch, or memory of past experiences, make up the individual, his behaviour and responses to his environment. In the process of thinking, feeling, dreaming or remembering, these circuits come into operation, and are stimulated from without and from within.

These circuits in various parts of the brain can be artificially stimulated by electric currents or drugs. X-rays, ultra-violet, infra-red and cosmic rays and magnetic and gravitational fields, atmospheric pressure, humidity, etc., all stimulate and energize these cells. When these cells are artificially stimulated, the individual may see visions of all kinds. Depending upon his conditioning, memory and environment, these visions may be the recreation of a "real" past experience of the individual, or made up of "imagined" experience, not based on past "reality".

Thus a Hindu, if the appropriate centres of his brain are electrically stimulated, may be able to touch and talk to Shiva, Vishnu, Rama or Krishna; or his father, mother or son, who may be dead or far away. A Christian may see Christ or the Virgin Mary, or angels. A Muslim may see the Prophet Muhammad.

LSD, ganja, marijuana, and other drugs also can stimulate the cells and cause the individual to hallucinate. Many experiments have been made both with electric shocks and with drugs to find out whether what is called "enlightenment" or "transcendental" experience is merely the right kind of stimulation of the right brain cells.

Can *pranayama*, the yogic breathing technique, also help in stimulating some subtle glandular secretion which in turn creates the right conditions for certain cells in the brain to project the illusions of peace, joy and love?

If this is all there is to enlightenment and if there will be no experience beyond that which is made available by exciting and stimulating brain cells, all the scientific phenomena as well as the experiences of saints and mystics with their energy fields, can be explained as stimulations of the cells of the body and the mind.

The great sage-mystic Adi Shankaracharya, who lived in the eight century A.D., and constantly preached that only Brahma was true and the world was illusion (*Brahma Satyam Jaganmithya*), was once chased by the temple elephant. Shocked that the great sage who preached that the world was an illusion was running away from an elephant, some critics mocked Shankara, saying, "Shankara, the elephant is an illusion" ("Hasthi Mithya"). Shankara, still running, shouted back, "So is my running" ("Palayanam Api").

How then do we find out what is true? Can the mind find out and reach that which is (or is not) beyond it?

Thousands of books have been written on this subject throughout the ages in all lands and cultures. As the limited experience available through the senses and the mind is confusing and creates conflicts and tension, the individual has always wanted to escape it. Theories are therefore conceived which can lull the mind for a while by creating an illusion of nirvana, enlightenment.

Conditioning the mind to believe and "have faith" is not likely to lead to discovery of what is true. If an individual wants to find out if there is really anything beyond what the senses present to him he must go about it seriously and sincerely. Accounts of experiences are not enough. He himself must go through the experience before he believes in it. No secondhand experience, however powerful, great or intelligent its authority may be, will help him.

As in a scientific experiment, first of all the individual must examine the "instruments" that he is going to use in this search. If these are inadequate or inefficient he will not be able to proceed in his quest.

The journey is pathless, if it is to go beyond the mind into totally unknown regions. Images, words, symbols or concepts will hinder, not help.

The instruments the individual has are his body, his intellect, and his mind. If these are capable and efficient, he can proceed with his experiments.

Most individuals are unaware how efficient the body, the *annamaya kosha*, can be. This body, with its ductless glands and the enormously competent and highly sensitive nervous system, is constantly and spontaneously responding to his environment.

When the body is properly tuned and fit, it can respond to the minutest changes in the environment. The harmony and rhythm that is around the individual communicates itself to the *annamaya kosha* which can respond to this harmony and rhythm if the body system works at its best.

Hatha yoga, surya namaskars, and other physical disciplines such as Judo, can bring this about. There is great joy in tuning up the body through yoga or other systems of exercise. Contact with nature, with birds, animals, trees, mountains, rivers, lakes and the sea, as already stated, can bring back lost energy and harmony. When the body system is working well the individual can recognize order, harmony and rhythm around him; if there is any disorder within or without he will always efficiently try to remove it. He will try to put everything into order — his dress, food, the house he lives in and his surroundings.

When his body is operating at its maximum efficiency, the individual has the best basis for civilized, humane, considerate, careful and efficient action, for elegant living, speech and behaviour. This fitness of the body is the foundation on which the individual will depend for his further experiments in search of truth.

In today's world of huge urban cultures, of competition and hurry, the individual neglects his *annamaya kosha*. Most of us, through travelling in crowded buses, sitting uncomfortably in office chairs, or tending monotonous machines, throw strain on our systems which therefore do not operate even at 20% efficiency. It becomes extremely difficult to create order and harmony within ourselves, or be sensitive to that which is outside.

Crowds, noise and air and water pollution wear out the nervous system, the breathing apparatus, the liver, the stomach and other organs. The body, the *annamaya kosha*, is kept functioning at the

minimum level of efficiency. Drinking and smoking wear out the system more. They assume urgency and importance as counter-irritants to the frustrations and tensions of existence. An "individual" with such frustrations and tensions is incapable of contributing to harmonious or creative living either for himself or others. Sickness of mind or body limits one's capacity to express joy or compassion.

Once a child has a conscious contact with Nature, this contact will never be lost. When the young one feels the joy, excitement and vitality of a healthy body he will endeavour to keep it always in excellent form.

If the child's body is habituated to the maximum condition of efficiency while still young, all his activities, including sports and games, will be of the highest standard he can achieve. He will in any activity — cleaning the house, cooking or keeping the car, scooter or motorcycle in good condition — always aim at excellence and quality. A yogi will strive for perfection at every point of his life as he will *express the harmony within himself and respond to* the harmony outside him.

It is neither difficult nor boring for the young person to keep fit. *Swimming, mountaineering, riding, judo, fencing* — these and a multitude of other physically vitalizing sports are available today. Yoga enhances the yogi's performance in these sports, and he enjoys them more than an individual who has not the same sensitivity or harmony within him. The yogi is less anxious to win, less prone to pride and, therefore, less tense. In other words, he creates less obstacles between himself and his goal. He is relaxed in any activity and this brings him joy.

Without the perfect functioning of the body system, particularly, the *annamaya kosha*, the individual will find adventure very difficult, and discovery almost impossible.

The other "instrument", the most important one that the individual has, is his mind. *"Mana eva manushyanam karanam bandha moksha yoho"* (Mind alone is, for an individual, the cause of his bondage and liberation). Mind is not only important but all embracing and most powerful.

What is the mind of an individual? How does it operate? How is it linked with other minds? What does one do to maintain order and harmony in the functioning of the mind?

Scientists such as Eddington, Whitehead, Oppenheimer, Planck, Fermi and Penrose, have expressed the view that the energy that creates all that exists come from the mind.

That the mind is powerful, can influence happenings and events, transcends space and time and can act instantaneously even at enormous distances, has been propounded by scientists, philosophers and mystics. Some have written books about their travel to the farthest galaxies and about how they met the "inhabitants" there and talked with them in the language of mathematics! Unless an individual experiences all this himself he treats it as science fiction and it only amuses him.

Mind is energy. It can operate in the most unusual way. An interesting experiment done by some Canadian psychologists in 1972, in which they produced a ghost, could illustrate this. Iris H. Owen and Margaret Sparrow, with six other associates, conducted this experiment over a period of one year. It is called "Generation of paranormal physical phenomena in connection with our imaginary communication". It was fully reported in *New Horizons* Vol. 1, No. 3.

These "scientists" from Toronto decided to try an experiment in mind concentration and study its effect on their immediate environment.

Twice every week they decided to meet, and let their minds or thought decide what this experiment should be and how it should be carried out.

In the first week someone suggested that they should make up a totally fictitious story, each one contributing his bit to it they went along. This fictitious story, which was evolved by them in a couple of weeks, was as follows:

There lived in a certain village in England (the name of this village was not fictitious) in the 18th century, a lord of the Manor, called Mr Philips. He lived in a great, big castle surrounded by a *moat* full of water. Mr. Philips was married, but his gracious spouse was sexually frigid, so naturally, Philips took a young,

graceful, vivacious gypsy as a concubine. He hid her in a secret room of the castle, and visited her as often as he could.

One day by pure chance, the frigid, asexual wife of Mr. Philips found the poor girl on whom her husband had lavished affection, and naturally enraged, tied her to a stake and burnt her.

Poor Mr. Philips, shamed and dishonoured, climbed the parapet walls of the castle and threw himself down into the moat and died.

This story, totally fictitious except for the name of the English village, became the basis of the experiment in concentration. Sitting around a huge, bulky mahogany table which a dozen people could not have lifted, the group thought of their story silently for four months. At the end of this period, a thin mist started to gather in the room, though outside it was a dry, hot summer day.

At this stage the five decided to give up concentrating on the story and began to make their minds blank, that is, as far as their psychology-trained minds allowed them.

Within two weeks of this change in their tactics, a knocking started on the heavy mahogany table. In a couple of weeks more, this knocking became so persistent and distinct that it was obvious that "someone" wanted to communicate with them.

This someone was Mr. Philips. In the weeks that followed, Mr. Philips communicated to them that he had had no concubine, let alone a hidden gypsy one, and that his wife had been a truly gracious and beautiful lady who bore him many children, and that he did not die by suicide.

Mr. Philips then participated with the scientists in singing songs, and in playful moods he moved the table. One day he overturned the big bulky thing, and another time chased one of the scientists out of the room by pushing the table against him !

Dr. Servadio, the famous Italian psychoanalyst, in analysing and commenting on this experiment in a Rome newspaper in 1974, said that the power and energy of the mind is not yet fully understood or explored. All the spirits, gods and transcendental experience can be traced to and explained within the framework of the mind.

Dr. Servadio had lived and worked in India for ten years, and had studied Sanskrit and Vedanta and the Yogasutras of Patan-

Jali, as a scholar. When asked about transmental or transcendental experience he said that as a psychoanalyst who had made many experiments and experienced the supernatural, even poltergeists, he had come to the conclusion that all phenomena could be explained as a result of the power of the mind. No outside agencies —gods, devils, spirits or ghosts—are necessary to explain a terrestrial phenomenon.

Poltergeists have been reported in places all over the world. In many a house things have suddenly been thrown about, clothes caught fire, dirty objects appeared and soiled furniture, carpets and beds. Dr. Servadio has written many books on this phenomenon and studied hundreds of cases in India, Africa and Europe.

A poltergeist is usually taken to be a playful spirit in Africa, Asia and even in Europe. Dr. Servadio explained that invariably an adolescent boy, or more often a girl, would be involved in the incident. At puberty an adolescent person has a vivid imagination which "generates" enormous powers that have PK (Psycho Kinetic) energy. According to Dr. Servadio, it operates through the thought process of the adolescent which is single-pointed and intense, like a laser beam, creating the illusion of an event through a phenomenon of "interference".

In Tibet a special system of meditation is followed to free the mind of some intense obsession that interferes with it, such as hate or anger, or, more specially, the sex urge, which in this *Kaliyuga* (age of conflict) is, according to the Tibetans, the most difficult to transcend. Concentration is practised on an idol or a thanka. The concentration gradually becomes intense and the idol or picture-scroll is "concretized" to such an extent that the meditator can touch, feel and smell the object of his concentration as solid, though it is really non-substantial, imaginary. A mental hologram, in fact.

When this stage of concentration is reached, the meditator just juxtaposes this new conceptualization with the original obsession that has been haunting him. He knows that this conceptualization, though appearing to be solid, is really empty, non-substantial, *shunya*, and created by his own mind. He can then realize that the obsession too, has originated in his mind, and is shunya, empty.

With this realization of the emptiness of the obsession, its hold and pressure on the meditator vanishes.

Truly innumerable experiences and examples can be quoted to show how powerful the mind is, and what methods are used to loosen its grip on the individual. The point to be understood here is that unless the mind itself is in harmony it cannot create order around it.

Of all the *koshas*—the energy fields in which the individual functions—*the manomaya kosha* is not only the most potent and active but it is also where all distortions, diseases and disorders arise. Knowledge, experience and action will be distorted if this energy field is not stable.

The modern mind is affected and distorted by the innumerable stimuli which we have discussed previously, that are often confusing, contradictory and irritating. This not only creates chaos in the mind of the individual but in his actions also, as all action originates in this mind.

The distortion and disasters that follow when the individual gets involved in the ideas of power have been discussed earlier. This involvement also is at the level of the *manomaya kosha.*

In modern life the mind, over-stimulated by the sensations of sound, taste, smell and speed, feels lonely, lost, exhausted and above all, empty. Through sex the mind seeks fulfilment, completeness and rejuvenation.

This need of the mind has been understood in this age of consumerism and all the propaganda for sales and service is built on it. It is amazing how many advertisements for all types of goods and services focus on the female body (and now often the male one too) and its sexual appeal. Cars, scooters, planes and even factory machines are advertised in this way. It certainly helps to sell the wares, but has complicated human relationships and the structure of society.

Once upon a time, and it seems ages ago, love and sex, family life and the upholding of traditions and culture, were considered sacred. They were linked with a higher purpose, especially in old fashioned, tradition-bound, religion-oriented societies such as in India. Though the idea was often distorted and caused unhappi-

ness, marriage was considered a sacrament, and a joint effort to seek release from *samsara*, this wordly existence, and gain *moksha*. Without a wife, or sex experience, an individual could not, it is said, reach *moksha*, or enlightenment. Even Adi Shankara had to enter the dead body of a king, revive him for a few hours, and experience sex, before he could claim complete understanding of reality.

The story is an interesting one. The Adi Shankara (8th century A.D.) realised that total enlightenment was not possible for him without the experience of sex. But he was bound by the vow of absolute celibacy.

Thus when he knew that the king of a neighbouring country was on the point of death, he attempted the Yoga called *parakaya pravesh* yoga, or the yoga of entering another body.

He told his disciples that he was going into *samadhi* (trance) and that under no condition was he to be disturbed, or his body touched.

When the dead body of the king was suddenly revived by the entry of Shankara's soul into it, the queen was naturally overjoyed. But she later became suspicious at the tremendous energy of the old king. She therefore sent her spies all round, and coming to know that Shankara had gone into *samadhi*, guessed that for some yogic purpose he must have entered the dead king's body.

As she was now happy with the "revived" old king, she sent the spies back to burn the body of Shankara, who was still in *samadhi*, so that the soul could not return to it!

However Shankara made haste and returned to his body in good time, and was then able to pursue his path to liberation!

The Hindus considered sex energy the most important of all creative forces, and it was symbolized in Amba or Parvati. She was worshipped as the creator and ruler of the world whilst Brahma, Shiva, and Vishnu, only watched and presided over the whole affair. She, the primordial ever-existing Energy, *Jagadamba*, was the *Adi Maya*, the primary illusion or *Adi Shakti*, the primal power.

This mystic and intuitive interpretation of sex has now been distorted, and sex has been reduced to a futile search for release

from worldly tensions created by the mind. This empty pursuit can bring no harmony or bliss to the life of an individual.

The whole of the Tantric tradition was built on the experience of the true nature of the sex energy, the *Chogyalma*, the *Vajra Yogini*, the *Dakini*. The mind of even an enlightened individual could get lost and bewildered by its power, like that of the great Guru Matsyendranath. It was his disciple Gorakhnath who had to rescue the guru from his entanglement.

Matsyendranath, called Meena Nath in Tibet, was a great guru. He was proud of his powers, and even arrogant and imagined that he was in full control of the creative energy.

Perhaps to test him, Queen Tilottala of the "Kingdom of Women" invited Matsyendranath to teach them the yoga of liberation.

He was very cordially and devotedly received in this Queendom but was soon ensnared in the pleasure he pursued there and forgot the purpose of his mission.

After years and years, when he was considered lost by the outside world, his disciple Goraksh (Gorakh) Nath went to this Queendom disguised as the leader of a troupe of singers and dancers, and, during the performance, subtly conveyed to his guru over the rhythms of the mridangam which he himself was beating, "Chalo Machindara Gorakha Aya !" — "Come Matsyendranath, Gorakha has come !", i.e, "Matsyendranath has come into control of his senses." (Go = senses; Rakha = in control of).

Apart from the biological and biochemical aspects of sex which can be controlled, directed and harmonized at the level of the *annamaya kosha*, this *Mayaic* force influences the *manomaya kosha*. It is there, and not at the body-food-energy level, that sex is subject to more distortion. In this modern age of advertisements, radio, cinema and television, sex is no longer presented as a normal, biological function, but as an abnormal state of mind which compels an individual to act in a manner that creates tensions and chaos for himself and his family and society.

Mind is thought; for an individual without thought there is no existence. Thought is a delayed response to a sensation. At the very moment of sensation there is no thought. When one first sees

a brilliant breath-taking sunset, a snow-covered peak in the Himalayas or a sudden downpour with flashes of lightning and thunder, one is aware of beauty, but does not think about it. A fraction of a moment later the mind recognizes the sensation, names it, compares it with past experiences, and thought is born. Together with the thought the "I" is born, in a *pratitya samutpada*, or concomitant causation.

The "I" becomes involved in the "thought" through desire: wanting, not-wanting, fearing, hoping, being pleased, etc. The thought is never simultaneous with the sensation. Nor is the "I". Both are non-substantial, illusory, impermanent, and change with the movement of the mind. To understand and experience the truth of this is knowledge.

The "I" which is involved in and born with thought which is ever changing, acts in response to the thought. The thought, the "I", the "now" and the response of the "I" to the thought which follows the sensation are not a direct response to the first sensation. All three, the knower, the process of knowing, and the known are thus insubstantial, unreal and illusory, like the hologram which is nothing but a projection of an interference created by the crossing of two energy currents.

If action is undertaken on the basis of the response of the illusory "I" to the illusory thought, the result will be contradictions, conflicts and sorrow. As the Buddha said, it is ignorance that leads the individual into sorrow and suffering.

Only by understanding the true nature of the mind, that is, thought, can an individual awaken himself into reality. In modern times, with such tremendous pressures on the mind, and experiences that are numerous and confusing, the individual without this knowledge is lost.

New methods of brain-washing and thought control are being devised. The State, the politicians, the profit makers, the media, all of them are set upon creating stimulations for the individual, so that they can control, dominate and exploit him or her.

Educational institutions, opportunities for employment, supply of goods and services, are all being increasingly centralized and controlled by authority. The individual is thus kept under con-

trol. The science and technique of this control is now almost perfect. If it were not for the individual's craving for the Truth, this would then be the end of the story. If the individual was really only a co-product of thought, then tyranny, exploitation, conflict and sorrow could be his only destiny.

Can the realization of Truth by an individual prevent this catastrophe and suffering? Have the "enlightened persons", from Buddha, Saraha, Parshvanatha, Tilopa, Naropa, Marpa, Milarepa, Shankara and hundreds of others of yesterday, to today's Ramakrishna, Ramana Maharshi, J. Krishnamurti and others, made any difference to the march of events?

Does an individual who controls and quietens his mind lead other individual minds to tranquillity? For how long have martyrdoms of a Christ or a Mahatma Gandhi influenced events or affected other minds?

Perhaps the answers will emerge if, as the great Gurus and enlightened ones have preached, the individual himself reaches the Truth by understanding the mind, its operations, its structure and its energy.

If the "I" and the "thought" and the consequent actions are to be really understood as illusory, *shunya, maya,* how does the individual go about it?

CHAPTER
X

FALSEHOOD THE REAL—THE TRUE AND THE SELF



In order to know the truth one must surely recognize falsehood as false. When a rope falsely appears to be a serpent, the response is fear. When the light of a lamp shows it to be a rope, the fear is gone.

Fear, anger, hate, pride and greed are all states of a mind that is not tranquil. An agitated mind is a distorted one in which the reflection of the real is also distorted, just as the rope is distorted to seem like a snake.

The methods practised to reach an understanding of the mind-energy are similar in all spiritual disciplines.

Initially, controlled breathing and constant "watchfulness" *(awadhana)* of the act of controlled breathing quickly bring tranquillity.

Once the mind is tranquillized through breathing, the discovery of the true nature of the mind begins. Through this, concentration or the yoga of one-pointedness *(ekagrata)* is to be learnt.

There are two aspects of the mind—"moving" and "non-moving". In the moving aspect thoughts and feelings arise one after the other, in quick succession. In the non-moving part, this movement is watched, without approval or disapproval.

In the Upanishads, this aspect is illustrated by two birds on a tree, one eating the fruit and the other ceaselessly watching the first eating it.

By virtue of these breathing practices, and the watching of the moving mind by the one that is as steadfast as a rock, the mind, so difficult to control, can be subdued.

When the mind is brought under control, concentration on the breathing process is automatic. At this stage, each thought, as it arises, can be cut off at its very root, at the very same moment, thus leaving unshaped the concept or idea which would normally follow.

A thought is cut at the root before it takes shape, and the mind assumes its natural condition, i.e., of absolute stability, unmoved by the disturbing process of thought.

Another way to curb the ceaseless activity of the moving mind creating thoughts in response to stumuli is to allow the thoughts to dissipate themselves. When the stage of *ekagrata* is reached, a beginning is made in analysing the essential nature of the moving and non-moving.

Milarepa, the great lord of Yogins, has said, "When the mind is left in the primordial, unmodified condition, knowledge dawneth; when this condition is maintained, comparable in its calmness to the flow of a deep river, knowledge in its completeness is attained. Wholly abandon all directing and shaping of thoughts; ever maintain quiescence of mind."

It is only when there is total indifference, *anasakti* (non-attachment), and when the state has been reached when you can watch "choicelessly" (as Krishnamurti says) the arising and vanishing of thoughts, that the analysis of the moving and the non-moving parts of the mind is possible, not before.

The "I"-making (*ahamkar*) process must cease totally. As thoughts arise, the "I" identifies himself with them. This is the "I"-making process. Thought, as has been seen earlier, is a delayed response or memory of the stimuli. Identification is thus made with that which is non-existent.

Identification gives a continuity and an energy to thought and feeling, which they would not otherwise have. Without this, they

will soon cease to exist. They will have no grip or power over the individual.

An individual sees a tree. Immediately, though a fraction of a second later, it is given a name "T-R-E-E". Together with the naming of the tree the "I" is born; as "I see the tree". Remembering other trees, and evoking memories of earlier happenings connected with trees, the "I" continues the process of conceptualizing.

The relationship of the individual is thus no longer with the original stimulation but with the thoughts of trees, and with the "I"-consciousness that they had evoked; these thoughts have no permanence or any real relationship with the reality of the original stimulus.

Ramana Maharshi says, "Nor is there any such thing as the physical world apart from and independent of thought. In deep sleep there are no thoughts, nor is there the world. In the wakeful and dream states thoughts are present and there is also the world. Just as the spider draws out the thread of the cobweb from within itself and withdraws it again into itself, in the same way the mind projects the world out of itself and absorbs it back into itself.

"The world is perceived as an apparent objective reality when the mind is eternalized, thereby forsaking its identity with the self. When the world is then perceived the true nature of the self is not revealed. Conversely when the self is realized the world ceases to appear as an objective reality."

How does this affect the "day-to-day" (unreal?) world in which we "imagine" we function? What about the cruelty, hunger, poverty, ignorance and suffering? How do we stop all this misery? What change, what reform is necessary? Can there be any reform of a dream, an illusion? Why reform it?

J. Krishnamurti feels that most types of reformation bring with them new problems. He feels that the truly religious person is not concerned with reform; does not seek merely to produce a change in the social order, but seeks the Truth. This very search has a transforming effect on society. According to Krishnamurti, education should help the student in the search for Truth.

What is the "time-space" framework within which the search for truth, for God, takes place? Does the right social action when

in search of truth transform society immediately, or over a period of time? How many "seekers" per 100,000 ignorants are required to make any difference?

J. Krishnamurti believes that man is energy and that if man does not seek truth, this energy will become destructive. Society, by controlling the individual, smothers this energy. But Krishnamurti feels that the energy can be used in seeking God or Truth so that all human activity becomes significant.

An individual who constantly seeks truth from moment to moment may perhaps survive. What happens then to all those others, millions of them around him, who do not or cannot seek it, and thus are not able to reach out to that indestructible energy? Does the additional, increased vitality of the seeker after truth or God affect them? Or does the ignorance, lack of energy, misery of the millions affect the seeker? Does his energy, like gravitation or magnetism, affect other areas? Mind-energy being the most subtle and the most powerful *sarga* or source of all creation, its action in one area of existence would affect all other areas on the various planes where it operates. What "laws" does this mind-energy follow in its operation? Is it restricted and constrained in its functioning by space and time? Does an individual of today feel like silencing his mind? Do the young and the energetic themselves seek more and more stimulation, or are they stimulated by others so that their minds may be controlled by those in authority or those who want to sell goods to them?

Thousands today all over the world, especially the young, have an unexpressed or repressed urge to seek harmony, joy, companionship. The young of today are no less sincere, sensitive, idealistic and capable of dedicated and efficient work, than the young of any other past age. If anything, they are even more keen and able to prove their worth as individuals, as they are freed from the chains and restrictions, the taboos and the mind-conditioning of the old systems, religious or cultural.

But today there are only a few "heroes" before them. They have no "knights in shining armour" to inspire them.

If the young ones in their homes, schools and other institutions come to feel the joy and energy of a totally tension-free existence,

they will certainly be attracted and will pursue their individual paths towards this "liberation" from their conflicts, boredom, purposelessness and neurosis.

Very few of those today who claim to be spiritual can really help the young. Swallowed by their own pride, ignorance and rivalries, they bring only superstition, magic and rituals to the young. No wonder most people soon turn away from spirituality altogether, and become cynics.

In modern society there are two types of individuals who perhaps can bring a new, wider and more profound perspective to the young, help them to reach higher levels of consciousness and enable them to act efficiently, competently and fully.

Both these groups of individuals have a holistic, more comprehensive approach to the process of living. Both can bring to the young ones a truer understanding of their existence and of their duty or *dharma*.

These two groups of individuals are the scientists and the mystics. The scientists have now projected a universe that is at once non-material, full of vital energy, in a constant state of change, and at the same time an integrated, interconnected whole. In this universe the individual can function with an intelligent, compassionate awareness and with no "permanent" set of relationships to get attached to. Being aware of the various energies that create this flux of relationships, he can respond efficiently to them and act intelligently and holistically.

In the picture projected by the scientists, happiness is being in tune with the harmony and rhythm of these energies. Sorrow will follow through ignorance of this harmony and rhythm, and action that goes against it, such as the individual's positing a fixed, permanent position for himself. Wrong and ignorant identifications also create distortions and sorrow.

The world of the mystics is a "unit" created by the mind. Reaching that which is beyond the mind brings joy and experience. The understanding of this process by which the mind creates the world, and of how the individual then gets attached to both, brings about liberation and compassion. In this state of "compassionate intelligence" all actions would lead to happiness.

Will it be possible to popularize these approaches, the scientific and mystic, both paths leading to experience that is fulfilling and both of them realizable through experiments?

If in homes and schools, through the radio, the newspapers and television, the young are brought to feel the beauty, energy, harmony, and intelligence that is all around them, and how easy it is for them to reach and experience it, surely at least one in a hundred will be excited by the thought.

The training of the mind to proceed step by step to reach the state of thoughtless consciousness and the joy it brings, could become, at least for a few, a worthwhile game to play by themselves. Beginning as a game, this discipline can transform their lives.

Youth all over the world, irrespective of caste, colour, creed or nation, is eager for excitement, whether it is in travel, dress, music or any activity. The quest for truth can be the most exciting. This journey would also bring them joy. But will those who can set youth on this path do their duty? Or are they like the scholars, saints and warriors, Bhishma, Drona, Krupa and others of the Mahabharata times, stuck in the mud of power, pride and bureaucratic indifference?

Draupadi, wife of the five Pandavas, when being disrobed in public by their cousins the Kauravas, implored the Pandavas to speak up against the atrocity. Each one in turn muttered *sotto-voce "Arthasya daso wayam"* (we are but slaves of money); for Duryodhana, the Kaurava king, had totally ruined the Pandavas in gambling, and brought them into his power. A similar situation exists today among those who could speak out against the present systems. Most have bargained away their freedom of speech in the search for security. How many scientists, economists, sociologists and political philosophers of today, who have holistic vision, dare to proclaim the truth *openly and fearlessly? Few can think clearly outside the* narrow nationalistic or sectarian work within which they are happy to function. Most of them are either pen-pushers or solicitous propagandists for those who hold power. How can they inspire a new vision?

The major part of research and development expenditure today is for the manufacture of armaments. Thousands of scientists, econo-

mists, psychologists, sociologists, writers, television and other media operators are employed in this game in all countries. Only a handful come out and shout at the hypocrisy and waste of it all. There are not many Jack Andersons around!

Only after many more scientists, economists, psychologists and sociologists reach the decision to organize and run the world in a more practical way, will the young be fired with the challenge and follow them.

Perhaps this is expecting too much of the scientists. But who else, other than they who have knowledge and vision, *samyak drishti*, can be depended upon? Can a politician who plays with power have this vision? Or a profit maker? Or a religious fanatic? If one scientist in a thousand acquires *samyak drishti* he can drag the other 999 after him. In India, amongst a population of 640,000,000, we have not been fortunate enough to have had even six such individuals over the past sixty years!

Can the few that may have this vision, though still operating in a bureaucratic and power-political framework, communicate it to the young? Can they courageously fight processes that are anti-human? The Pugwash group has done, and is doing, its bit. So are thinker-politicians such as Dr. Willy Brandt, Helmut Schmidt and Edward Heath. Even such groups and individuals, though they do have the proper means of communication available to them, have not been able so far to reach out to young minds. Why?

For two reasons, apparently; one, because at the present economic, sociological and industrial level there is little awareness of the truth.

Secondly, those who are to listen and respond are not yet ready to do so. They feel secure in their ignorance, their habits and their organizations. They cannot see the urgency of the situation. Look at the response to the proposals of the Dr. Brandt commission for the transfer of technology to the poor southern countries, to create a more balanced economic order. Even a so-called civilized state such as Great Britain considers the old formulas adequate for dealing with the new challenge. They feel secure in their present state.

Without waiting for a cataclysm to destroy everything that exists today, a start should be made to bring peace and prosperity to the

Indian Ocean area. Indeed Jawaharlal Nehru had the vision of it. Indira Gandhi has the capacity and intelligence to put it into action. The time is ripe, but there are too few to plan, organize and execute it. Only if individuals all over this area see that they can indeed survive without fear, anger, poverty, refugee camps, war, privations, corruption and exploitation, will they be inspired to join in the adventure.

For several years, the non-aligned "group of 77" has been thinking out new ideas of cooperation on terms of mutual advantage between peoples and cultures and governments of different areas of this world. There have been false starts galore, and unintelligent, incompetent approaches leading to dead ends. Today, as capacity and experience have grown, with them has grown the inevitability of such a pattern of interrelated interdependence emerging in many areas of the world.

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To fulfil himself, an individual must be awakened to a more profound and subtler intelligence. The abundance of goods and services available to an individual are not enough to fulfil him. On the contrary, this abundance causes emotional, psychological and intellectual problems which he does not know how to tackle. In the USA, Canada, Japan and Scandinavia, after obtaining colour televisions, houses, cars, private aeroplanes and yachts. and in spite of going for holidays twice a year, people are still restless, discontented and unhappy.

Have they lost interest in life because they have had too many material comforts ? Or is it because individuals require something more than these to satisfy them ? The "problems" of affluence have been described by many writers, and there does not seem to be a possibility of discovering any solution for them. But there are millions all over the world for whom affluence is a distant dream. How can the possibility of better living, and more comforts, such as clean water, better drainage, more and better food, clothing and shelter be denied to them ?

Many millions, to start with, may confuse comfort with contentment and, as their wants are met and comforts start to grow, may feel frustrated and unhappy in spite of clean water, air-conditioned houses, cars, cinemas, supermarkets, hospitals, etc.

In the Buddhist and Jain traditions and in the ascetic reaches of the Hindu tradition, all enjoyment is sinful, and only renunciation brings merit, *punya,* to an individual. Keep away from the senses, they say, and if you ever by mistake feel any joy in any of them, immediately perform *prayaschitta,* the purification ritual!

Having this approach as a background has very often distorted the scale of values of the Hindu, Buddhist or Jain and made his daily life routine and lack-lustre, full of superstition and ritual. Often this kind of life means a lack of beauty, energy and purpose. The distortion runs thus: If everything is to be renounced and joy is a sin, why care about the quality of life, about craftsmanship or elegance, or even about honesty and decency?

Addiction to comfort can make people so self-centred and selfish that a community life of sharing, caring and working together becomes impossible. But on the other hand, craving or selfishness suppressed by taboos or rituals expresses itself in violence, anger and exploitation elsewhere.

The more enlightened and practical approach to the relationship of the individual with his desires (thoughts) is that of the Ishopanishad and the Bhagavad Geeta.

The first verse of the Ishopanishad states:

> *Isavasyam idam sarvam yat kim ca jagatyayam*
> *jagat;*
> *Tena tyaktena bhunjithaha, ma gradhah,*
> *Kasyavid dhanam.*

(All that exists in Divine Energy, that which moves in this world of movement. Enjoy it by not being attached to it; do not be greedy; whose is this wealth?)

This deeply moving, profound and subtle injunction is most appropriate to the problem of living, especially in modern times.

The individual and the world, the "I" and the "Not-I", are not separate. The individual is this energy; the drop is the ocean. The

problem arises owing to the illusion of separateness. Enjoy, that is, be full of joy, *bhunjithaha*.

The individual must realize that everything around him is a part of him. Surely then he will take care of, will regard and love the tree, the bird, the river, the sea, the rock, as himself. He will then enjoy all that exists around him, including the new machines full of vital energy and their products. *Ma gradhaha;* then why covet? Why be greedy? *Kasyavid dhanam*, whose are all these riches?

If this approach is understood at the deepest level, all conflicts born out of the ignorant relationship of the individual with his desires can be eliminated. When the ignorance of duality is removed, action will be complete and creative.

The Bhagavad Geeta approaches the problem of the individual and his senses, thoughts and desires from an angle which is slightly different, but no less logical and effective. The Geeta states that it is the three *gunas*, the three types of energies, *satva*, *raja* and *tama*, that often create confusion and conflicts. The real is shrouded by these *gunas*.

Satva is intelligence, harmony, peace and love. *Raja* is action, restlessness, pride, ego and violence. *Tama* is sloth, inertia, ignorance. Each individual is a mixture of these three *gunas* or energies in different proportions; and these determine his character.

Like individuals, societies can and do express one or two of these *gunas* more predominantly. For example the societies of the West, the USA and Europe, have a dominance of *raja* energy. They are active, adventurous, aggressive, proud and valiant. India on the other hand seems to express a curious mixture of *tama* and *satva* with no *raja* — except perhaps in individuals like Mrs. Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and few others. Sloth, ignorance, superstition, inactivity and a slavish mentality are today dominant.

A society can and does change its balance of *gunas* from time to time. The examples in the past are Greece, Egypt, India and Rome. Europe, a few hundred years ago, rose from the sloth and ignorance of the Dark Ages before the Renaissance, and reached a high level of action and knowledge. Japan has, for the time being, established an equilibrium between the three *gunas*.

An individual can also change the equilibrium, and from ignorance, sloth and misery can rise up to action, adventure, compassion, peace, harmony and joy.

Lord Krishna tells Arjuna to let these vital energies go their own way without being attracted or repulsed by them, or attached to the illusions they create: *Guna guneshu vartanta iti matwa na sajjate.* "The *gunas* move according to their inner dynamics; knowing this, do not get attached to them (involved in them)" says the Lord of the Universe. Chapter after chapter of the Geeta is devoted to this theme of the three *gunas,* and how the wise one with vision is only a witness (*sakshi*) of the play of the *gunas,* without ever involving himself in them.

The "wise" of today, that is, those with comprehensive vision, *samyak drishti,* will utilize fully the vitality and power of science and technology with its machines, to get rid of poverty and the drudgery of life. Yet they will stay apart from the machines, aloof, watchful, not involved. They can, by their behaviour, set an example to others.

Watchfulness, *sakshi bhava,* or *avadhana kriya,* releases the individual from tensions and conflicts caused by involvement in the three *gunas.* It is having to make a choice between alternatives; or wanting to do something, and, at the same time, not being able to do it, or else not wanting to do it out of fear, greed or anxiety, that causes tension. Tension expands energy. Anger, hate and anxiety cause an enormous loss of energy and nervous exhaustion. Attention, "choiceless awareness", as Krishnamurti calls it, relieves the individual of tension.

The fact of this can be immediately experimented with and experienced. Be watchful of the thoughts, the desire to hang on to them or get rid of them. Seeing, hearing, tasting, feeling, sleeping or dreaming, watch with full attention and without taking sides.

At first, the thought-feeling and the emotion in response to stimuli, or memory will be followed after an interval by the act of being aware by watchfulness. Later the thought and the awareness will arise simultaneously, which will make possible the experience of immense energy and joy from moment to moment.

This need not be taken on faith, but should be seriously experimented with. A new kind of "light" will then be available by which you can hear, smell and feel in full freedom and completeness.

J. Krishnamurti approaches the problem of the relationship of the individual with his thought from a unique, dynamic angle. He asks, whether there can be emotion without an idea, without a formula, without a concept, or an action for which there is no resistance as well. Is is not then, he asks, a waste of energy to have formulas and concepts?

The Bhagavad Geeta states the same idea: *Nahya sankalpa sanyasi yogi bhawati kaschana;* without abandoning conceptual planning, one cannot be a true yogi.

The question is then, do you release energy for action by watchfulness, *avadhan kriya,* and transform yourself?

Do you remain silent and watchful, disassociate yourself from the process of thought, and then act? By remaining silent and watchful at the very centre that is all the time projecting "I", you disassociate yourself from the process of thought and release the energy for action.

Without thought the inexhaustible, eternal energy alone operates; the individual is no more. But for harmony, joy, happiness and love, the individual must reach out beyond the mental-intellectual-physical planes of existence, into the transcendental, and find completion, reach fulfilment. This is only possible when the relationship of the individual with his thoughts and desires is cleared; that is, when the individual is one with the universe. The Ishopanishad says:

Vidyam cavidyam ca yus tad vedobhayam saha,
Avidyaya mrutyam tertwa vidyaya mritan asnute

("He who has transcendental and worldly knowledge, can overcome death through the worldly knowledge, and with the help of the transcendental, reach immortality.")

: *Avidya* (worldly knowledge, that is, science and technology) through intelligent, competent production and distribution of

goods and services, can eliminate poverty, disease, sorrow. But to survive in the Eternal, the Immortal, the unborn, the deathless, the individual must die every moment to the thought-memory-desire process. When the individual, the separateness, dies, then radically transforming action — compassionate, continuous, spontaneous, and powerful — comes into existence.

To survive must the individual then die? Is death the real survival? Is all this restless activity, this excitement, this adventure of the techno-scientific new world useless? Is this another form of escapism?

Is it that an individual who has rid himself of desires, will or thought, is not interested in death, because then there is no individual?

Nisargadatta Maharaj was asked: "And what is Death?"

He replied: "It is the change in the living process of a particular body. Integration ends and disintegration sets in."

"*But what about the Knower? With* the disappearance of the body does the Knower also disappear?"

"Just as the Knower of the body appears at birth, so he dis*appears at death.*"

"And nothing remains?"

"Life remains. Consciousness needs a vehicle and an instrument for manifestation. When life produces another body, another Knower comes into being."

"Is there a causal link between the successive body Knowers or body minds?"

"Yes, *there is something* that may be called the memory body, *or causal* body, a record of all that was thought, wanted, and done. *It is like* a cloud of *image held together*."

"What is this sense of separate existence?"

"It is a reflection, in a separate body, of the One reality. In this reflection, the unlimited and the limited are confused and taken to be the same. To undo this confusion is the purpose of Yoga."

"How to know of Death?"

"Before you can know anything directly, non-verbally, (without words or images) you must know the Knower. So far you took the

mind for the Knower. It is not so. The mind clogs you up with images and ideas which leave scars in the memory. You take remembering to be knowledge. True knowledge is ever fresh, new, unexpected. It wells up from within; when you know what you are, you are also what you know. Between knowing and being there is no gap."

So! We started with an investigation of the survival of the individual. We discussed how the individual's sense of identity is formed by his various relationships: those with other humans, with authority, with his environment, with his work, with his desires. Considering the possibility that only by each individual's solitary quest for the truth could other individuals be led to survival, we sought the advice of saints and seekers about enlightenment and the liberation of the individual from fear and conflict; and finally we are told that the individual ultimately survives in Death alone!

But what until then? The interim journey of discovery is a lonely one. The individual is all alone, with no one else really to help or guide him, though guideposts are sometimes encountered on the path. However, there soon comes the realization that as an individual he has no limits within which he is enclosed, and that the more subtle and refined his experience, the wider and more profound the horizon of his vision, the more happy and harmonious he will be. His spontaneous action leads to beneficial effects all around him. Himself a drop in the ocean, when he experiences that the entire ocean is contained in the drop, his experience is liberation. When the drop is in the ocean, there is only the ocean.

JAI JAGADAMB